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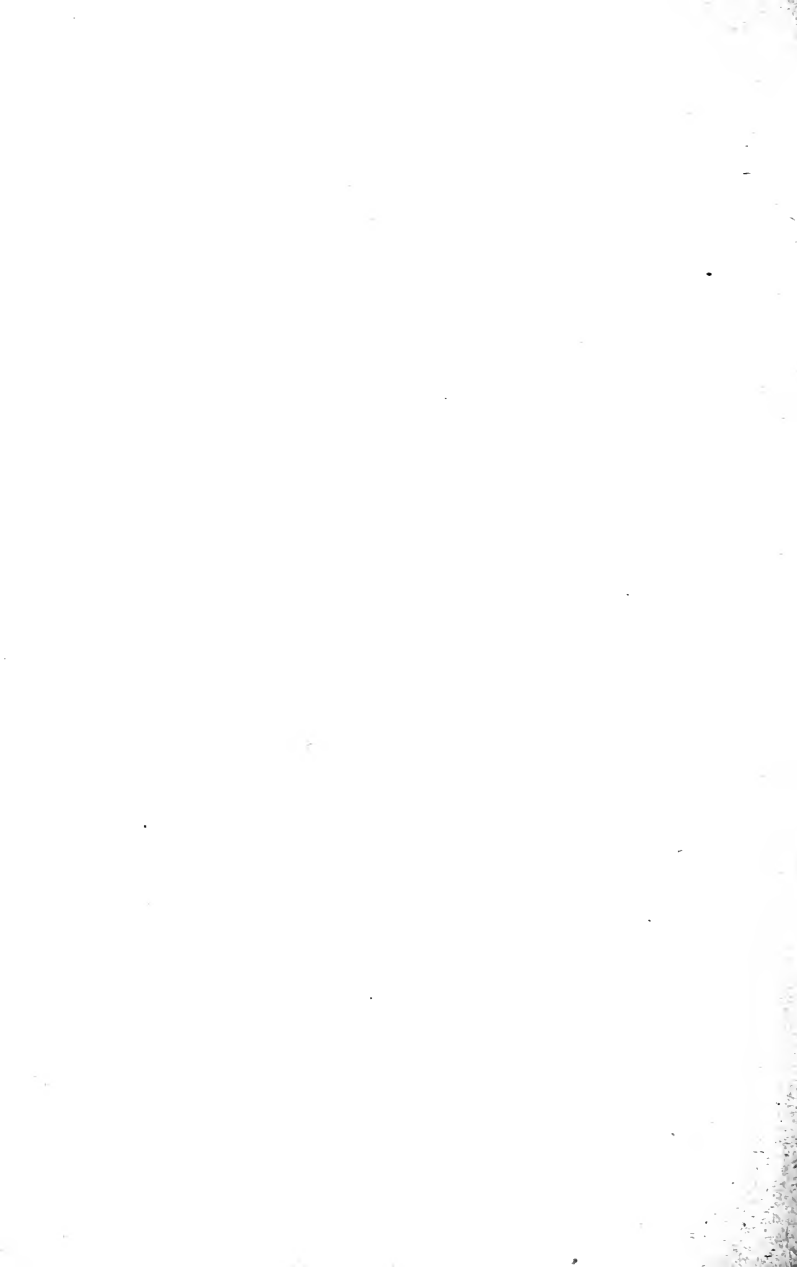
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## THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRIT

AS IT IS SET FORTH IN

*THE SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW  
TESTAMENTS.*

BY

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AUTHOR OF "THE CHRISTIAN'S PLEA AGAINST MODERN UNBELIEF,"

"FOUR CENTURIES OF SILENCE,"

"STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JONAH," ETC. ETC.

"To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to  
this word, it is because there is no light in them" [R.V. "no morning  
for them"].—ISA. viii. 20

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## PREFACE.

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THE following pages have been written in the hope that they may supply a want. The testimony of Scripture to the Spirit has not been put together with sufficient clearness and fulness. Evangelical Truth may be helped to win the victory over its enemies as the Doctrine of the Spirit is studied in the light of God's own Word. It is a great subject—far too great to be adequately treated by any one writer. But whether adequate or not, an attempt, humbly and sincerely made, to bring forth to more steadfast attention the teaching of Scripture should be of some service. The author has avoided scholastic discussions as much as possible. His aim has been practical. He commits these pages with all their imperfections to the blessing of Him of whom they speak. May the Voice of God be heard through the broken utterances of the voice of man !

PUTNEY, *September 1889.*



# CONTENTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
Introductory . . . . .	I

## CHAPTER II.

Old Testament Revelation of the Spirit previous to the Time of Samuel . . . . .	21
---	----

## CHAPTER III.

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit from the Time of Samuel to the Close of the Old Testament Canon . . . . .	91
---	----

## CHAPTER IV.

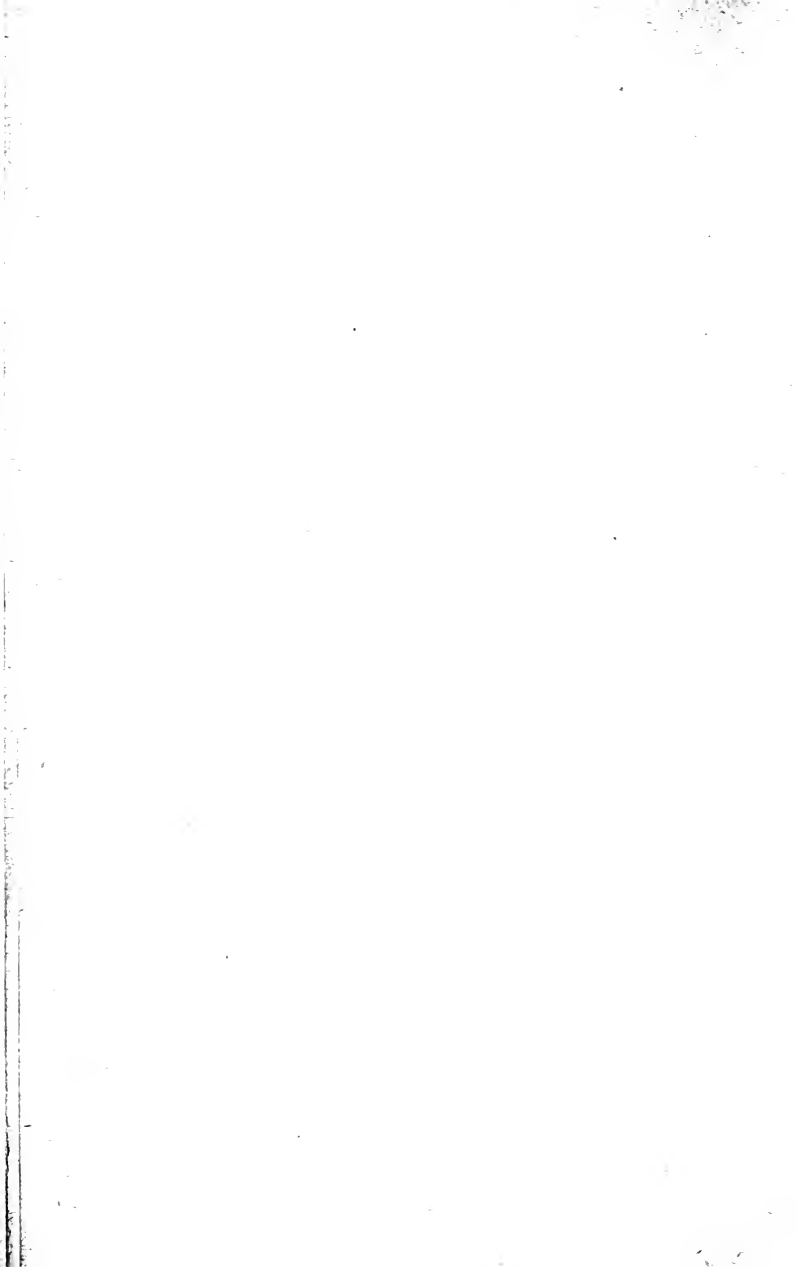
The Testimony of Jewish Literature to the Doctrine of the Spirit, from the Close of the Old Testament Canon to the Time of Christ . . . . .	171
---	-----

## CHAPTER V.

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as taught in the Four Gospels and until the Day of Pentecost . . . . .	189
--	-----

## CHAPTER VI.

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as it is taught in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles and Apocalypse . . . . .	259
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# VOX DEI.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

WITH the Scriptures in our hands (and with the history of the Church of God before us, as a practical commentary by which the truth of the written Word is illustrated and explained), it ought not to be impossible to put into clear and orderly statement what is divinely taught, and commonly believed, on the subject of the Holy Spirit. The specific want of such an age as the present, when speculation is rife and opinions clash, while at the same time extraordinary activity is aroused,—when, because we think and work at high pressure in all departments of human life, we are tempted to be superficial and too easily caught by novelty,—our greatest demand must be for *materials* wherewith to build up solid structures of faith. Mere *individual* conclusions, put forth on the ground of thought, philosophical method, profound reflection on the inner consciousness, high flights of the poetical imagination, or wonderful personal experience, however valuable they may be regarded, as part of the great mass of evi-

dence gathered together through all the ages to the work of the Spirit in Man, must be put into a subordinate place when we ask, What is the doctrine of the Spirit, as it should be before us in the first foundations of our faith? There will be no satisfactory settlement of the many controversies which disturb the minds of Christians, and divide them so much from one another, until the doctrines which lie at the root of all others have been boldly and reverently faced; what can be stated in respect to them simply set forth, and their acceptance demanded of all believers. We go on discussing such subjects as Atonement, Inspiration, Miracles, Eschatology, with very little prospect of more unity and less error; the clouds of dust which are raised increasing the confusion and disorder. Will the Truth ever be revealed to us so long as we shrink from the duty which seems to be in the highest place, however difficult to fulfil, to know what the *basis* is on which the whole of our Christian consciousness stands? There must be Truths which hold up all the fulness of the spiritual edifice of thought and life. We shall never be at peace so long as we doubt one another's standing on the first principles of faith. Is our doctrine of God the same? Are we on the same ground of Relation between God and Man? Have we the same view of the work of salvation? Is Christ the Son of God, and is the Spirit of God a Divine Person, in the same meaning of the words with all of us? Surely it is quite sufficient to ask these and similar questions, to bring at once before our minds the unsatisfactory state of Christian thought on the most vital doctrines. At the present time, why are we



afraid, as we seem to be, of dealing with the greatest truths? Is it not because we measure against them the narrow limits of the human understanding, and relegate them to the depths of mystery as transcendental? Is not the prevailing tendency of the modern mind the confession of its own impotence? And yet it does not at all follow, because we fail to grasp great truths with the hand of the conceptive power which we call "*Understanding*," and which is trained to lay hold of earthly things, that such Truths must be ignored and put back into an abyss of the unknown and unknowable. We may not be able to formulate any definitions in Theology which are accepted by all Christians, but we may nevertheless be able to open to the clear view of the believing soul what those primary truths are which come forth in the Bible and in the Christian consciousness, as the pillars of the spiritual universe. So it is in our study of Nature; scientific systems, schemes of inductive reasoning, crowds of facts, and conclusions and anticipations drawn from the facts, all are in the foreground, the work of human thought and observation; but in the background there remain the greatest facts of all, the most universally known and acknowledged of all truths, such as the continuity and interdependence of all forces and existences, the reasonableness of the universe, the steadfastness of laws; the absolute behind the relative, the eternal behind the temporal, the One behind the many. And although the unbelieving man of science is content to use familiar abstract terms to describe this faith of his, *we* know that he is simply hiding himself in those abstractions from the voice

of his own *personality*, which summons him to believe in Him from whom and by whom and in whom are all things, "*to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.*" There is a miserable "*Agnosticism*" in the Church as well as in the world. We are calling the greatest truths of our faith unsearchable mysteries, not in the spirit of reverential belief, but in the spirit of an indifferent Positivism. We are making ourselves contented to live as it were from hand to mouth in our Theology. The truths which are ignored soon come to be doubted. Practical religion grows feeble when it is supported upon nothing but sentiments or external activities. The love which abounds in fruits of righteousness strikes its roots into the depths of the faith which works by it. Therefore if the coming Christianity of the future is to be both victorious over the world and beautiful in the peacefulness and order of its own inner life, we must not be afraid to speak to one another the wisdom of God, which is not indeed the wisdom of this world, but was "*ordained by God before the world for our glory*" (1 Cor. ii. 7).

It is very undesirable, in the present condition of philosophical thought and Christian belief, to attempt to systematise the doctrines of Christianity. No great thinker, however learned and devout, has succeeded in adapting the language of Scripture and the progressive systematising thought of Man to one another, so that he has clothed the revelation of God in terms satisfactory to the developed reason and put the truths of religion in an order of relationship to one another such as could be accepted as rationally perfect. The explanation of this

failure is not difficult. When we philosophise on the Bible and on the facts of the Christian consciousness, we cannot divest ourselves of the ideas and phraseology which have been made for us by the thought of past ages, and especially by the thought of our own age. Whatever there is in Man as Man, even though there be an inexhaustible depth of divine truth laid up in the human spirit as such, still, so far as the thought of Man has attained hitherto, it remains imperfect. "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in *all* our philosophies." Until there is a perfect Philosophy there cannot be a perfect Theology. Our divergences and controversies are chiefly due to the imperfection of our reasonings and of the language in which we attempt to express them. Therefore, it is not by mere attempts at system that advance is made. We do well to postpone system to the future. Meanwhile what is wanted is the more patient and profound study both of the written Word of God and of the facts of history and experience.

No writer can escape altogether from the influence of system and tradition. He is foolish if he makes the attempt to do so. But the reader may find help in a work which betrays human weakness. The Bible itself is full of human idiosyncrasies; yet the Truth of God is not perverted by passing through the atmosphere of individual thought. If the light of the sun strikes upon the eye, it must accommodate itself to the organ of vision. But there is a great difference between the broad daylight and the artificial lights which men may make for themselves. When we try to see the Truth in the written

Word and in the facts of experience, we may be acting under the influence of an eclecticism which is a mere self-originated light darkening the counsel of God. But when we seek Truth in the spirit of childlike dependence on Divine guidance, although we may not be entirely delivered from the darkness of our own thoughts and the darkness of the world in which we live, we may be assured that we shall find the way of Life. There is no finality in Theology; but there is a progress in the enlightenment of the people of God. The Bible itself is seen more fully open to view in the larger and intenser light of a more advanced knowledge and more developed experience. What a Christian man deduces from his study of Scripture and the world may be in itself worth little more than what has been deduced in former times, and yet it may be a great help to the Church to carry on age after age a progressive induction of the facts. The following pages have not been prepared with the intention of advocating any conclusions which have been reached, though the belief of the writer must necessarily be traceable in them. The simple object in view has been to put together the testimony of the past in the writings of inspired men, so that the mind of the reader may be able to fix itself the more steadfastly on the doctrine of the Spirit as it is thus revealed.

There is so wide a difference, however, amongst those who use the Word of God as to the principles upon which it is to be consulted and in what sense it is a Divine oracle, that it will be necessary, before proceeding, to explain in what light the Bible is regarded in this work

as a progressive revelation of the Truth of God. The distinction was made by the theological writers of the Reformation, and by those who developed the systematic theology of the Reformers, between general revelation and special revelation. The whole history of human progress may be said to be a revelation.

“For I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.”

God has been speaking to men in every age and in every place. Even the errors and superstitions of mankind are not without their meaning, as indicating the groping of the human mind and heart after that which is beyond itself. But the fact that the farther we go back in our researches into ancient religions, the nearer we seem to come to a state of knowledge and worship comparatively pure and simple, shows that while God has not left men altogether without light, they have by their corruptions turned that light into darkness. The real question then is not whether there has been what Lessing called an “Education of the Human Race,” by various means and by the discipline of Providence, but whether, in addition to this general revelation, there has been a special communication of Divine Truth to any particular part of the human race? Now, that there should be such speciality in the Divine procedure is very natural, and quite in accordance with the facts of history. Take, for example, the differences which are found in different people in respect to the cultivation of the æsthetic faculties. However we may account for it, we can have no doubt that the development of art has not been universal and uniform, but through special art centres,

where national taste and faculty have distinguished one people from another—as in the cases of the Egyptians, Accadians, Etruscans, and Greeks, and in later times the Italians. Why then should it be incredible that there should be one people from whom, as a centre, religious light and impulse should spread through the earth? The facts which we are able to discover, apart from the record given us in the Book of Genesis, certainly confirm the general view of the origin of religious history which the Bible sets before us. By means of migration the light preserved amongst a certain portion of the human race was carried forward and developed from age to age. Abraham was the heir to an inheritance of Divine tradition which he was led by special providential guidance to carry forth out of the midst of a mass of corruption in Mesopotamia to fix it as a seed in the chosen soil of Palestine, where it would be so placed that it could become the centre of religious life to the world. Now, when we speak of this Divine revelation as progressive, we simply claim for it that it follows the method of development which is universal in earthly things. All that God gives to man He gives progressively, as he is able to receive it. The knowledge of earthly things is progressive; how much more, then, the knowledge of heavenly things? Abraham cannot receive as Paul received. Jews could not unfold the doctrine of religion as Christians can unfold it. No greater Old Testament prophet ever lived than John the Baptist, but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he, that is to say, reflects a greater light upon the world, because “The Son of

Righteousness" has actually "arisen with healing in His wings." But this progress of revelation cannot be explained, so far as the facts and incidents of it are concerned, by the working of natural laws alone. It is a natural law that revelation should be progressive, but it is not a mere natural law which accounts for the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world. It is a natural law that one people should be eminent above others for their religious faculty and attainments, but it is not by a natural law that we are able to explain the origin and history of the Jewish nation, and the wonderful writings which they have handed down to the nations of the earth. The Apostle Paul uses the word "*mystery*," "hidden from ages and generations," and at last revealed and published. The idea which is represented in the word "*mystery*" is that of a treasure of knowledge laid up in secret and partially communicated from time to time, until the treasure-house is at last widely opened, and the whole immeasurable riches are distributed through the world. Behind the partial revelations of the Old Testament there is the fulness of grace waiting to be opened. "*Without us*," that is, apart from the opened fulness of the Gospel, the revelations of the Old Testament were not complete; the believers, true believers as they were, were yet "*not made perfect*," because the object of their faith was not fully revealed. The progress in revelation was not the progress of accumulated human faculty, but of dispensation. As the education of the race progressed, the Divine dispensations of Truth and Mercy advanced. The progress, no doubt, was in a sense reciprocal. The successive bestowments of

Truth prepared a people of the Lord for successive enlargements of the gift. The reservations of the Divine procedure are not grudgings of caprice or inflictions of judgment. They are simply merciful accommodations to the law of human life and development. As we withhold from our children that which they are unfitted by their age to receive, so God withholds in the childhood of the world that which He subsequently bestows freely and fully to the full-grown race, when "the fulness of times" had come, in which the main principles of human life and culture were sufficiently matured to form a soil into which the seed of Divine light could be cast. This dispensational progress of revelation is, however, quite a different thing from what is being advanced as a theory by many, who seem to make it their aim to separate the Bible as little as possible from the literature of the world. It is admitted by all that, speaking broadly, there has been a continuous progress in intellectual and moral enlightenment in the history of mankind, though it must be acknowledged that this general continuity is consistent with vast differences of time and place; but looking at the facts brought before us in the Bible, those which culminated in the Incarnation of the Son of God, and those which flowed forth from that centre over the world in the propagation of Christianity, we hold that the revelation thus specialised is entirely different from anything else to be observed in the history of mankind. It may please our modern philosophical speculators to group many religions round Christianity, and ally them to one another by resemblances and by laws traceable in their



development; but the one conspicuous contrast between the revelation of the Bible and all others deprives all such reasoning of its supposed importance, and shows that it is little better than philosophical dilettanteism. The golden thread which binds together all the books of the Bible and makes them one is the central fact of Christianity, which goes back to the first page of Genesis, just as it goes forward to the last page of the Apocalypse—“*God manifest in the flesh.*” All the Bible is built upon the Incarnation, therefore it is essentially a Divine structure. It cannot be said of any other sacred book or of any other so-called religion in the world that a Divine fact lies at its foundation. Take away Christ out of the Scriptures; not only have you taken away their chief value, but you have reduced them from the level of a Divine revelation to a mere collection of Jewish sayings and records, the greater part of which becomes meaningless and obscure. But read into them the great interpreting fact which stands forth in their centre, and then they are lifted up from the level of mere national literature to the height of a Divine progressive dispensation of inexhaustible, unsearchable riches,—“Oracles of God,”—the Light of Heaven, shining at times dimly and in dark places, but at last high up in the zenith of the world’s noontide,—“the Light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world.”

This doctrine of dispensations is supposed by some to be inconsistent with a true philosophy of human nature. The consciousness of man is represented by these objectors as containing implicitly all that can ever be communicated to it, so that revelation is only the progressive awakening

of man to the knowledge of himself. The Platonic doctrine of reminiscence has been revived by the school of Christian Pantheists. We are represented as "trailing clouds of glory" from a pre-existing state, bringing into the world with us that which the facts and experiences of life gradually call into distinct consciousness, like a sleeper recovering his knowledge of the real world about him by a process of recognition, as the clouds of sleep pass away. Clothed in poetical language, such representations may be harmless, but they are worthless as Philosophy. When we speak of the human mind, we use a general term, which takes up into itself the whole history of the race and every individual. No doubt there is an expansion of faculty which may be boundless in the depths of eternity; but the facts seem to say that revelation and the capacity to receive revelation advance together and by reciprocal action; therefore, instead of man being able to develop all truth out of his own consciousness, it would be better to say that consciousness itself is developed chiefly by means of the communications made from without. Ideally, man has all knowledge in himself, but actually his nature is progressive; therefore revelation as a fact is in perfect accordance with the law of human growth. God has created us to hold fellowship with Himself. As we are more divine, we are more human. And He who was the Son of God was also the Son of Man. Perfect human nature is only realised in Him, who was not a mere link in the long chain of the human race, but the second Adam, the Lord from heaven—at once the Revealer and the Revealed.

The unity of revelation, then, is not a unity of coherence and mere temporal continuity, but a unity of nature, of constitution, of essence. One grand idea and purpose underlies the whole body of the Scriptures. When we study the Old Testament and the New Testament side by side and in their mutual relation, we behold the Truth of God in its completeness. If we inquire what is the doctrine of the Spirit in the Bible, we take it for granted that there is one doctrine of the Spirit pervading the whole revelation. The light which is a dawning light in Genesis is a noonday light in the Gospel. But it is the same Light of day, the day of Jesus Christ. There is much to be learned by looking at the morning sky, though until the sun has risen we cannot fully understand it. There are clouds on the horizon, but they are illuminated clouds. Patient, believing study of the Old Testament is one of the great requirements of the present day. Those who see God everywhere the same God of Light, in whom is no darkness at all, will not confound the darkness of the age and the men in which and through whom the revelation was made with the revelation itself. The scientist studies the single ray of light that he may know what light is; we may study partial and individual revelations of Divine Truth that we may the better know the fulness of God made manifest. At the same time, it is right to acknowledge that such a view of revelation may be abused, and has been wrongly employed in many instances. To take ancient language and simply read into it modern ideas; to crowd into the narrow channels of the upper highlands of human history all the copious abundance

of subsequent knowledge and thought, is not to confirm truth, but to confuse it. Let the small threads of truth be threads still, but let us view them in their relation to one another and in their common direction, in their harmony and in their onward course; so we shall the better understand the mighty river of Divine Grace which rolls along the plain, to which all families of the earth are invited, that they may freely take of the water of life flowing, with whatever diversity of manifestation, "from the Throne of God and of the Lamb."

It will be evident that such a subject as that which is treated in this work may be approached from different sides, as, *e.g.*, from the side of the human consciousness itself and therefore in view of philosophical determinations and phraseology; or from the side of Revelation and the testimony of the Spirit in the Church and in the world, and therefore in view of Scripture language and the traditional beliefs of the people of God. No light should be rejected, from whatever source it may come, when we are simply seeking the Truth. But it is not possible to do justice to the metaphysical side of such a doctrine as that of the Spirit without entering upon discussions which would be unsuitable to these pages. It may, however, be observed that among those who study the changes and movements of theological thought the most attentively, there is a growing conviction that whatever the settlement may be which time shall bring when the controversies of the present have passed by, the security and permanence of that settlement must be that the whole of our theological belief shall be made to rest

upon the Divine Personality. The work of the Saviour can never be rightly understood except as the Person of the Saviour is clearly seen in its glory as Divine. No doctrine of Atonement will be formulated satisfying the language of Scripture and responding to the consciousness of the universal Christian Church, except on the ground of the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a hopeful sign of progress in these latter days, amidst much that is discouraging, that so much thought is being directed to the Person of the Mediator. The Gospels have never been more profoundly studied; the Humanity of Christ has never been more reverently contemplated; the uniqueness of His life and character has never been more widely acknowledged. But there is a cloud still hanging about the Personality of the Redeemer in many minds; and we are waiting for the Voice to speak out of the cloud yet more loudly and decisively, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Many professed believers in Christ have no settled, clearly thought-out belief on the subject of the Lord's Divinity. They are satisfied with a profound reverence for His superhuman goodness and unlimited inspiration. God was in Him and worked through Him, as in and through no other human being from the beginning of the world. Reason can go no farther. Faith requires no exacter definition of His Personality. But with so much mist round the greatest fact of our religion, how is it possible that such doctrines as that of the Atonement and the whole mediatorial relation of Christ to His Church should be lifted out of the region of controversy and rejoiced in as shining

truths of God, lighting up our way to heaven? At present, it is the common course to put all such subjects aside as simply inscrutable, and content ourselves with what is called practical Christianity; a great deal of which may consist, at least for a time, with a great deal of doubt upon essential truths, with an indifference to them which sometimes prepares the way for their rejection. Is it not a fact that there are multitudes of Christians who simply shrug their shoulders when such subjects are mentioned, and contentedly acknowledge that they are not theological, and therefore have no definite beliefs, except as they repeat familiar words of a creed and have no intention of renouncing them? Surely the remedy for this unsatisfactory state of our minds is not ignoring such subjects, but endeavouring to look at them from every possible point of view. Some are unfitted for a logical treatment of any question, who can yet be drawn closer to the truth by devout and contemplative meditation upon it. Some who would be repelled by discussion would be attracted by exposition of the Scripture. Some who would attach no ideas to philosophical language would yet feel the force of words in which the Spirit of God speaks to them. Such a doctrine as the Deity of Christ must be capable of being placed before us in many lights, and, amongst others, in the light of spiritual experience. Out of the depths of a believing heart there will come forth a testimony to the glorious supremacy of the Saviour. By all methods and in all varieties of representation, it must be the work of the Christian Church at the present time to convince the world that Jesus is the Son of God. And as that

work is accomplished, faith itself will be revived and exalted. "*Other foundation,*" for the restoration of Christendom and the salvation of mankind, "*can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*" He is the Temple of God. The "*lively stones*" are built up in Him. By the indwelling of His Divinity in His people will they be a "*spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*"

Now what is true of the Divine Personality of the Saviour is equally true of the Divine Personality of the Spirit. Both the faith and the language of Christians seem to betray a cloudiness of conception and a weakness of conviction on the whole subject of the person and work of the Holy Ghost. It is not, perhaps, possible to dispense with such terms as "*influence,*" "*outpouring,*" "*motions of the Spirit,*" "*manifestations,*" "*inspirations,*" and many others like them. They have become so familiar in religious phraseology, that they may be regarded as part of the current speech of Christendom. But it can scarcely be doubted that if the personality of the Holy Ghost were more vividly and more constantly in our thoughts, such terms would be more sparingly used, and we should speak to one another of the work of the Spirit much more as the realisation of a personal presence and activity. Take, for example, such an illustration as may be seen in a time of awakened desire and prayer for the revival of religion. Having poured out very fervent and united petitions for Divine influences to be sent, the Church looks for signs of something which is

supposed to be communicated like a shower of rain upon the thirsty earth, or like the breaking through of the sunshine upon a cloudy day, or like the pouring in of a quickening and stimulating fluid into a drooping and fainting animal life. But if we believe that the Holy Ghost is a Divine Person, living with us and in us, working from within the centre of our being outwards upon our life and upon the life of the world, will not both our prayers and our expectations be different? If we are desiring to obtain the influence and help of a personal friend, what is the course we pursue? Are we contented to put our desires in writing and then wait for the answer? The more intimate our relations with a person, the less satisfied we are with mere conventional methods of intercourse, and the less we depend upon any one channel of communication. We may use writing, we may indicate to our friend the direct means by which his love may express itself; but, generally speaking, the deeper and more vital the union between us, the more we shall depend upon the love itself, and the less upon these times and seasons and signs and methods. Personal union with the Holy Spirit of God carries with it everything. Is He dwelling with me and in me? Then what is there which can be wanting in the working out of my life? The gifts are in the Person; the stirring up of those gifts in ourselves is the realisation of the personal presence. Was not this the solution of that enigma which seemed to be in the Saviour's farewell words to His first disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not



away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you" (John xvi. 7)? The bodily presence and the humiliation of the Saviour were as a veil upon the eyes of the disciples. The death, resurrection, and glorification of Jesus brought them into a heavenly state of mind, in which they were much nearer to the real Christ than they were before. By that change wrought upon their faith it became more spiritual, more exalted; their fellowship with the risen Saviour was a deeper and more living fellowship, and that was the presence in them and with them of the Divine Spirit. Was not their consciousness of new power, of new wisdom, of new light and life, both for themselves and for the world, their consciousness of a Personal Being in whom they lived and moved? It is not enough to say influence was poured out on them; it is not enough to say gifts were bestowed on them; it is not enough to say miracles were wrought in them and through them. The one great distinguishing fact of that apostolic history is this, the men themselves were "full of the Holy Ghost," *i.e.*, were vividly conscious that they were inspired, that God the Spirit was dwelling and working in them. If the Church of Christ at this present time will take to itself afresh the doctrine of the Personality of the Holy Ghost, will worship and adore, and love and seek and trust and serve Him who is the Spirit of Truth and Life, there will be the same glorious testimony given to His presence and power. It is with such a conviction that these pages have been written. Mere theological treat-

ment of such a subject is of little value. But to ask again, "What saith the Scripture?" What saith the Spirit of God Himself in the churches? may be to quicken faith and disperse some of the clouds which hide from us the face of God.

## CHAPTER II.

### OLD TESTAMENT REVELATION OF THE SPIRIT PREVIOUS TO THE TIME OF SAMUEL.

THE testimony of the Scriptures to the personality and work of the Holy Ghost naturally divides itself into that which preceded the Advent of the Saviour and that which followed it. This, however, is the testimony of writings which, in their two groups of the Old Testament and the New Testament, are separated from one another by an interval of about four hundred and fifty years. The period which intervened between the last of the prophets, Malachi, and the first of the writings of the New Testament is not without its value as bearing witness, in the remains of Jewish literature which have come down to us, to a surviving faith amongst God's ancient people in some of the teachings of the Old Testament on the doctrine of the Spirit. This testimony from the ages which were not marked by any acknowledged revelations will be considered and described in its proper place. The canonical books of the Old Testament carry us back to an immense antiquity; for the earlier writings, to say nothing of the Book of Job, certainly represent a traditional doctrine which the lawgiver Moses received from his fathers, and of which it is impossible to determine the original source

so far as the human medium is concerned. The revelations which are represented in the Jewish Scriptures from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Malachi certainly extended over two thousand years—possibly over a much longer period. They run side by side with the whole length of the stream of human history down to the great epoch when the Eastern and Western worlds came into collision, and the power of the Persian Empire began to break itself against the intellectual and moral might of Greece, the opening of a new era in the history of mankind.

The thirty-nine books which now form our Old Testament were grouped by the Jewish scribes under the three main divisions of The Law, The Prophets, and The Hagiographa; but this was for the purpose of exalting the study of the Pentateuch, the Torah or Law being regarded as the substance of Divine truth and commandment; the writings of the prophets and all other writings in the Canon being held as subsidiary, and given by God for the purpose of explaining and enforcing the teaching of the Law. All were inspired; but while the same Divine authority attached to all Scripture, the scribes taught that some Scriptures were prescriptive, others expository, therefore the place of the books in respect to the reader was higher or lower according to the nature of them, though all were within the sacred boundary of Scripture—all were holy writings. But the important fact which appears in these Jewish books is that they are identified with a continuous, progressive revelation, the stages of which we shall be able with some degree of confidence to indicate. There

are two broad lines at least which mark off these writings into separate divisions. First, there is the remarkable change which was brought about through the agency of Samuel, who was at the same time an inspired prophet of God and a very powerful ruler. He instituted colleges for the study of Scripture and the cultivation of prophetic gifts, and therefore may be said to have commenced the line of prophets. The revelations which were given previous to his time may be therefore regarded as in some measure distinguished from those which commenced from his day. Another broad line of distinction comes in with the commencement of written prophecy. From the time of Joel, about 800 years B.C., to the close of the Canon, we connect the history of Judah and Israel with prophets who were specially commissioned of God, some to one kingdom, and some to both kingdoms; and their prophecies being preserved to us, enable us to study the doctrine of the Spirit as it was revealed to the people of Palestine during some four hundred years, and in close relation to events of the greatest magnitude in the Divine dealings both with the Jews and surrounding nations. While there is no difference, as we maintain, in the doctrine of the Spirit which is taught all through this long series of books, it will help us much in the study of them if we make the division thus indicated, and consider, first, the revelations of the Old Testament previous to the time of Samuel.

The eight books which precede the First Book of Samuel, *i.e.*, the Pentateuch, together with Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, represent a very great length of time

and diversity of Divine dispensations. We readily distinguish in them the simplicity and breadth of the patriarchal revelations, the distinct and positive declarations and enactments of the Mosaic system; and then, subsequently, the records of a period of several centuries in length, when, in the rude and unsettled state of a prolonged struggle with the heathen inhabitants of Palestine, religious observances were in confusion, and Divine communications were of a special and individual character. As dispensations, these three periods may be said to be progressive; but it must be carefully observed that while they represent a continuous Divine teaching, they differ widely from one another, both in the amount of light which shines in them and in the manner in which it is given. When we compare the revelations given to the Patriarchs with those embodied in the whole ministry and legislation of Moses, the contrast is very striking. The Book of Genesis is like a great mountain country lying out before us, with its heights and its depths, its bright clear sky-piercing facts, and its mists and shadows hiding much from our view. But the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are like the description of a populated land, with its cities and well-ordered affairs. While here and there is a startling fact, a burst of Divine light throwing a supernatural glory over the whole, still the greater part of the books is in the nature of positive statement and command. And yet we recognise the revelations of Genesis carried forward into the systematic and orderly language of the great Legislator. When the *military* period commences, and the Law, as law, is in the

background, there are again, as in the patriarchal ages, wonderful facts, wonderful men, scattered and broken lights in many places. But it is not difficult to find, even in the disturbed and confused time of the Judges, that the people look back upon the dispensation of the Law, and look forward to a future development of the Divine purposes of grace for those who are being settled in the Land of the Covenant. This separation of the books before Samuel into three divisions is of great importance in studying the doctrine of the Spirit. The ministry of Moses brings out for the first time into distinct prominence the conception of Law, and, therefore, of the Spirit of God embodied in an inspired Ruler. The germs of such ideas we can discover in Genesis; but they are before us in utmost clearness and fulness in the consecration and appointment of Moses. He is face to face with Jehovah. His whole legislation is given to the people under the formula, "*And the Lord said unto Moses.*" Inspiration, therefore, appears in the Mosaic legislation in a much more regular and expressed form. We see that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of order and life, working through the whole body of the nation, and through the whole manifold variety of human action and relationship. This revelation of God as the God of His people, in their settled state as a people, stands between the two very different records—that of the ages during which there was no *national* life filled with the Spirit, and that in which, preparatory to a long dispensation of Divine messengers and special spiritual communications, there was a fragmentary and scattered dispensation of remarkable signs and revela-

tions, through the clouds and smoke of great military struggles, and by means of extraordinary individuals. Each of these periods is full of instruction on the subject of the Spirit. We will now look more closely into the nature of each in succession.

Now, taking the Book of Genesis into our hands, and supposing it to be the only sacred book we possessed, we should certainly have no difficulty in putting together from its pages a very decided doctrine of the Spirit. The men who are brought before us are not ordinary men, they are full of the Holy Ghost. It is again and again declared that God spake to them, that He gave them commandments, directions, and promises. He walked with them, and they with Him. Moreover, the language of the first part of the book, which deals with the earliest facts of the human existence on this earth, if we cannot say that it is poetry, is yet like the utterance of one inspired. Here and there, and especially at the end of the book, in the dying prophecy of Jacob, we have similar language employed to that which subsequently was distinctly ascribed to a special Divine afflatus, to the work of the Spirit of God. And still further, from the time of Abraham downward, we are led to think of a family, separated from the mass of the world, specially taught, and handing down from one generation to another a tradition of Divine Truth, what the Apostle Paul has called "the oracles of God." It is true that the personality of the Spirit of God is not as distinctly recognised as in the New Testament, nor indeed as in some other parts of the Old Testament; but the God of Genesis is certainly a triune God,



and the use of the term Spirit is not such as would be compatible with any other view than that of the Christian Church, though not formally the same. Let us consider carefully the language in its connection.

The first page of the Bible is the Word of God put into relation with the universe as a natural universe, with a natural order, in which man holds a place. The first two verses are a simple introduction to what follows. From verse 3 to verse 31 the Word of God is represented as over against the facts of Nature, as a commanding and formative Word. The evident intention of this form of language is to bring before us the close and perfect correspondence between what the universe reveals to us by its external appearance and constitutive facts and what was in the mind and will of God. "*And God said.*" "*And it was so.*" "And God saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good." Looking back, therefore, from the close of the chapter to the opening words, it is evident that the introductory verses must be taken in harmony with the whole statement, as placing the Divine Being over against the universe as a whole, so that the general meaning of the first two verses is that heaven and earth reflect the mind and will of God. "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*" — the whole sphere of things, those above and those below, which is a natural Jewish form of speech for the total realm of existence.

The idea conveyed by the term "*created*" is not different from that afterwards expressed by the word rendered "*made,*" or "*formed.*" There is no intended philosophy in

the language. It is not a technical word which is used, and it is not a theory of the origin of the universe which is set forth. But the writer evidently wishes to convey this thought: heaven and earth came into existence in the beginning, because God was eternally before them, and they were willed by Him. Then immediately occurs to him the fact that both in heaven above and in the earth beneath, as we now know them, there is fulness of existence, and there is steadfast order and progress in development. But this manifoldness and steadfastness of the universe is as truly the work of God as its first appearance. "Emptiness, and desolation, and darkness" are the three words which are employed to represent the fact that while there is light, and abundance of force, and steadfast development and order manifest now in the earth; still these are results obtained; they have come forth out of previous states which might be said to exist at periods. "The earth *was* without form and void, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep." The ordinary historical form of the substantive verb is used, because the writer is referring to *facts*, to what can be said to be *on the visible earth and in time*. God Himself, by His power and wisdom, and as the result of His direct voluntary action on visible things, brought forth the order we see—the light, the day, the night, the sky, the ocean, the seasons, and the inhabitants of earth, in all their boundless variety and wonderful arrangements. What, then, is the exact meaning to be attributed to the second verse—"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"? It must be admitted that the word rendered "Spirit" does literally mean

“wind” or “breath;” and, moreover, that at first it might seem to point to a natural fact or force, parallel with the “darkness” and “light” spoken of in close connection with it. Some would then explain the second verse as describing a natural process, a “wind of God,” meaning that a mighty and powerful movement of the atmosphere was upon the face of the waters of the ocean. But this is rendered highly improbable by the remarkable word “*meruchepheth*,” which may be translated “brooding,” a feminine form of the participle, and certainly inapplicable to a mere physical fact except by a very startling metaphor. While admitting the possibility of this merely naturalistic interpretation, there are two considerations which put it aside,—first, that the term “Spirit of God,” with exactly the same word, “*Ruach*,” wind or breath, is employed in the Book of Genesis and throughout the Old Testament with a personal meaning quite decided and unmistakable, as, *e.g.*, vi. 3, “And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh,” and xli. 38, “A man in whom the Spirit of God is.” And secondly, it is better to take the second verse in connection with the third; the Spirit of God was brooding on the face of the waters, and God said, “Let there be light,”—by which we are led to think of the Word of God as coming forth from His Spirit, which corresponds with the exact force of the language. The breath of God is brooding over creation, and that breath of God takes the shape of a direct command, becomes an external force and fact. “Let there be light, and there was light.” The name of God is a plural word,

and the verb which is connected with the formation of man, ver. 26, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," seems to imply a union in the creation of the highest creature on the earth of the perfect fulness of the Divine Personality, as though there were conference and counsel in the Creator Himself. The whole chapter conveys the thought of the Original Source of all being revealing Himself in the universe as Spirit, as Word, and as Fact; therefore the name, "*Elohim*," with a singular verb throughout, certainly implies unity in plurality, and plurality in unity. It is no proper objection to this view to say the plural is the plural of excellence or majesty. Why is it reverence that dictates the use of the plural when we speak of the greatest Being? Is it not because the mind of man instinctively regards the plural as higher in meaning than the singular, and that because as we rise in thought from the lowest objects of the material world to those of the rational and moral universe, we rise from the idea of mere dead individuality to that of consciousness, of personality, of the many-one and the one-many, which will not allow us to speak of God as though He were a mere objective unity? We can only call Him by a name which is comprehensive and glorious. However true it is that the formal theological doctrine of the Trinity was not before the mind of the writer of Genesis, it is yet manifest that he thought of the Divine Being as a manifold personality, who is "before all things and in whom all things consist," who is God the Beginning, God the Spirit, and God the Word. Some of the heathen cosmogonies resemble

Genesis, and even contain similar references to the brooding Spirit of God ; but they may be the result of primeval traditions, and therefore may preserve elements of a Divine revelation in them ; and if not, they testify to the correspondence between the Biblical teaching and the fundamental instincts and strivings of the human mind. No one could have written the first chapter of Genesis without a purifying and elevating influence from God. It is incomparably superior to anything the heathen world has to show. It harmonises with the whole Book of Revelation and forms a fitting introduction to it. The impression which is left upon us by the whole of the language which is employed about God in the Bible is that God is greater than the universe, and therefore He is not, as the physical Pantheist would say, the Universe itself taken as a whole and personified. And yet, while He is greater than the universe, He is not, as heathen philosophers said, separated from it and indifferent to its life. He is above it and yet in it ; He is over it as a father over his child, ruling and yet cherishing it, commanding His intelligent creatures, and yet taking them, as He took Israel, into covenant and fellowship with Himself. We cannot reconcile such a view of God and His relations to the universe with any other language than that which speaks of Him as Spirit. "God is Spirit"—that is the conclusion we draw from every page of Genesis, as well as from the use of the word "Spirit" itself. The German thinkers have very rightly distinguished three powers of being : first, absolute or abstract being ; secondly, individual being, such as we are accustomed to attribute to external single objects ; and thirdly, self-conscious being.

such as man knows himself to be. Certainly the intention of the Bible was not to represent God as a mere abstraction, nor as a mere "eidolon" like the heathen deity, a something which can be set up before us in its separate individuality, but as the original of our own self-conscious personality, spiritual being. The anthropomorphism of the Old Testament is not accommodation of the Divine to the human; it springs from a deep instinctive faith in the truth of the Scripture representation that Man was made in the image and likeness of God; therefore the culmination of the Scripture is in the fact of the Incarnation. He into whom God breathed the breath of life lives a life like God's, and both his body and his soul are a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Passing on to the story of Eden and the Fall, we are immediately arrested by the change of the name of God. When the creation of man is the subject, the Divine Personality is represented by the single word Elohim; but when the state of man, his relations to other creatures, his position as the head of a race, and as holding intercourse with God, his moral and spiritual nature, are dealt with in the facts of the story, then the single name Elohim becomes the double name Jehovah-Elohim. There is no necessity to discuss the questions of modern criticism as to the incorporation in the Book of Genesis of several ancient writings of different dates with different names of God in use in them. Whether such theories be maintained or not, it is reasonable to hold that the special form of the Divine name harmonises with the matter of the writing in which it is found. The name *Jehovah* is

undoubtedly more identified with the history of the Hebrew people, and therefore with the facts of redemption, than the name Elohim; therefore we may rightly conclude that the two names are together in the account of Eden and the Fall, because the subsequent revelations of the Jewish Scriptures may be said to be the unfolding of what is seen in germ and commencement in the second and third chapters of Genesis. Jehovah is the God of covenant, the God whose law was given to Moses, and whose promises were distinctly placed upon the foundation of His own faithfulness. The name Jehovah, which is closely connected with the substantive verb in Hebrew "to be," and is explained in Exod. iii. 14 as meaning "*I am that I am*," that is, the faithful and unchangeable God, who enters into covenant with His people, is the most appropriate name in a narrative which tells us of the love which prepared a garden of delight for man's residence, of the righteousness and truth which gave commandments, threatenings, and promises, of the mercy which spared the lives of the fallen creatures in the midst of judgment, and which refounded the life of humanity after the Fall on the basis of Law and Promise, and therefore made it a life of faith and obedience in the expectation of a Redeemer.

The relation between God and man is therefore spiritual. God acts towards man as a Spirit dealing with a spiritual being. Even in the simple fact that the creatures round about Adam were distinguished by him with appropriate names we are able to recognise the commencement of a series of inspirations which are described with more and

more fulness in the Scriptures. God brought the beast of the field and the fowl of the air to the man to see what he would call them; "and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof." A simple, Eastern, and primitive representation of the fact that names proceed from the spirit of man, and are given as that spirit of man is led by the Spirit of God. So Elihu said to Job (xxxii. 8), "There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding." The voice of Jehovah Elohim is heard by the man and his wife "*walking in the garden in the cool of the day*" (in the wind, or spirit, or breath of the day), that is, the breath, or voice, of the day was to them the voice of God; they heard the sound of the wind as the sound of One who was calling to them. "*And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden*" (vers. 8, 9, 10). This is not the mere naturalistic account of man's position among creatures; it is altogether on a higher level—man in the position of one who walks with God, and talks with God, and God with him. This can only be explained by what follows in the Scriptures; therefore it is evident, whoever wrote the story of Eden and the Fall, wrote it from the standpoint of inspiration. Man is a harp on which the breath of God can play; he responds to the Divine touch; he himself is as a god, knowing good and evil. If we cannot say that this is a direct revelation of the Spirit, it is at least introductory to such a revelation.

In the fourth chapter of Genesis, when the story of the human race is continued, apparently with distinct refer-



ence to the Fall, when the separation of the children of man becomes manifest into the good and the bad, the name Jehovah is employed almost alone (see ver. 25), and with marked emphasis; for in ver. 26 it is stated that as a name it was connected with man's worship, or, as some would understand the passage, it was introduced into the names given to men, as a memorial of the Divine covenant: "*Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah.*" Whether religious services are referred to, or the practice of calling men by names which embodied their faith, the connection of the words plainly indicates that Divine revelation and covenant are what is intended to be recorded. God appointed Seth in place of Abel, and the godly line went on to Enos; so the covenant of Jehovah was renewed and continued from generation to generation. It is only what we should expect to read, after this announcement, that the sin and misery of the race were not their destruction, but, through the mercy of God, His name was still their trust; that in the line of Abel's descendants one is singled out as especially inspired. "*And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah; and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years; and Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him*" (v. 21-24). We must interpret such words in the light of the whole book of Scripture. They point to the fact that thus early men were distinguished amongst their fellow-men for their direct intercourse with God and for their prophetic gifts. The hints which are given us are indeed but very brief

and slight; but is it probable that such a judgment as the Flood would have been poured out upon the human race if it had not been preceded by a long course of revelations and warnings? Can we believe that the preaching of Noah would be an isolated fact in that ancient world? May we not fairly conclude that such men as Enoch, Methuselah, and Noah represent a line of inspired men and a succession of Divine communications, culminating in him whose name was Rest and Comfort because he would preach both Righteousness and Love, that is, would renew the covenant of mercy with Jehovah? God universally sends the Spirit of Truth and Life before He sends the Angel of Destruction. The antediluvian men were certainly appealed to in the name of the God of their fathers, the God of revelation and redemption. The fact that there was preaching and prophesying, and that men lived a life which was so heavenly that it was at last translated into the skies, spoke very distinctly of God the Spirit. We make a great mistake when we suppose that primitive world to have been given up entirely to wickedness and ignorance. Apart from the teaching of Scripture, the facts which we are able to discover in the early history of the religions of the world indicate a simplicity of manners and a purity of worship quite consistent with what seems to be implied in the account in Genesis. The description of the corrupt state of the earth in Gen. vi. 5-7 is not the description of semi-barbarous tribes who have fallen into natural degradation and misery; it is the distinct condemnation of men as wicked, the thoughts of their hearts and their imaginations or

purposes and desires only evil continually. It is only in the presence of a large amount of light that such a condemnation could be justified; for "*this is the condemnation*" (this is the only ground on which men are ever condemned), "*that Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil*" (John iii. 19). This view of the antediluvian dispensation is confirmed by what is distinctly said of the Spirit of God in chapter vi. 3, after the mention of sons of God who took wives to themselves of those who were not daughters of God in the highest sense, but only daughters of men: "*And Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.*" It is true that this can be rendered, "*My breath shall not strive in man for ever,*" and might be taken to refer only to natural life and its continuance. But it must be remembered that it is introduced in connection with the story of Divine judgment in the Flood. It seems to refer to the prolonging of Divine forbearance to the men of that time, which, though it was so great, was yet in vain; for their wickedness became more defiant and unbearable. The period of probation shall yet be a long one—one hundred and twenty years; but before this change of human life is brought about, the great apocalypse of the Deluge must be set before men's eyes, that they may see the way of Life and the way of Death. If a merely natural fact were referred to in the words, "*My Spirit shall not always strive in man,*" we should surely have had a different verb employed; for it is more strictly "shall not

always *judge*." This word is capable of several renderings, " *dwell*" (as in the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and the Targum Onkelos), or "*be humbled*," i.e., by dwelling in man, or "*rule by judging*," which is the rendering of many of the highest commentators; but the context suggests that God is angry with man, therefore a mere physical fact cannot be all that is intended, although that is included in the language. If the "Spirit of God" meant no more than physical life, it would not be spoken of as so distinctly personal. "My Spirit striving" in "man." The description of the great Teacher of that time, the Comforter, is quite in accordance with the view that spiritual life is intended. "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God." "With thee will I establish my covenant." "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he." "Thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation." Surely such words describe a man who is separated from the corrupt world and saved, not because he was different in himself from the rest of the children of men, but because he was inspired; he was the subject of Divine grace; he communed with the Spirit of God. It was "by faith" that these "elders" before the Flood "obtained a good report." It was a faith which rested on a declared promise, on the Word of God, in which they lived and died. "By faith" (that is, by believing what God said) "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts; and through it he

being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him; for before his translation he hath had witness borne to him that he had been well-pleasing unto God. And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto Him; for he that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him. By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Heb. xi. 4-7.) How is it possible to read such a description of the faith of antediluvians and doubt that the dispensation under which they lived, however elementary, was yet a dispensation of the Spirit? God was even then speaking to and by men "*moved by the Holy Ghost.*" The leading characteristic of the whole narrative of the Flood is the believing man and his family acting upon Divine directions and promises, and as a result saved in the midst of outpoured judgments. The ark was made according to the Divine word; all its particulars and arrangements were Divine. And it is the climax of this story in which the climax of revelation is put before us, in the beginning of the new world (viii. 16-xi. 32). The name of Jehovah is identified with the covenant made with Noah and his descendants. The sacrifice with which the new world is inaugurated and sanctified is a very different sacrifice from that offered by either Cain or Abel. The distinction of clean and unclean beasts is distinctly com-

manded. The offerings are burnt-offerings. The sweet savour of the incense seems to be implied, or at least foreshadowed, and the covenant is renewed with mingled commandments and promises, imprecations and blessings. The bow in the cloud symbolises the union of Nature with man; and the blessing and curse on the families which proceeded out of the ark, with the following table of generations representing the spread of the new humanity under the new conditions, all set forth a dispensation in advance of any dispensation which preceded. Assuredly such a dispensation, in which God deals with the bounds of men's habitations, their occupations, their relations to one another, their habits, their religion, and their language, cannot be understood at all, unless we include in it the work of the Spirit. When we lift our eyes from the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures, and fix them upon the records of the ancient world previous to the time of Abraham, upon China, upon Egypt, upon Assyria, upon the few fragments which remain to us of the scattered nations which migrated from the north-east of Asia in a continued stream to the south and west, we are compelled to believe that there must have been either a wonderful richness of Divine communications bestowed on those ancient people, or an incalculable period of time must have elapsed before Abraham was called out of the midst of the Chaldeans. The favourite theory with some is that the human race slowly developed a high degree of intellectual and religious knowledge, and then lost it again by corruption. But such a theory is inconsistent with itself; for if the attainments

were the unfolding of native faculties by slow advances, why should the corruption take place? If the moral evil be simply natural evil, why is not natural advancement a preservation against it? Surely a much more rational and consistent view is that which sees in the primitive condition of man what the Bible describes as a high religious life, a life of contemplation and worship, promoting the intellectual advancement in certain directions, but not in others. "The entrance of Thy Word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." Experience shows to us that deeply religious men have a wisdom of their own, which, while it is not the wisdom of this world, is still an enlightenment of the natural faculties and elevation of the man himself. In the case of the Egyptians, we have evidence of great simplicity and comparative purity with great devoutness and a highly religious temperament. The Egyptian intellect may not have been at all comparable with that of the modern European in power to penetrate the laws of the universe and study the facts of the world, but it was certainly, among the trained minds of the priests and educated classes, wonderfully profound and philosophical. There seems some reason to believe that the speculations of modern thinkers were almost all anticipated both in India and in Egypt. Whence came this early development of mental force but from the religious stimulus, derived from the manifold traditions of the nations? It is impossible to pursue this subject further in this place. It has been dealt with by many writers during recent years, and was a favourite theme in the Alexandrian school of Christian

fathers. F. D. Maurice has made it the underlying thought of his profound and very suggestive "History of Philosophy," the earlier portions of which deserve much more attention than they have received from those who, while they may not accept Mr. Maurice's theology, must always be thankful for the witness he bears in his writings to the universal presence and energy of the Spirit of God. It is very remarkable that the Book of Genesis should say so little of the religious condition of the world from the time of Noah to the time of Abraham. We are left to infer that the Babel spirit was everywhere. The Babel of language is but a mere symbol of the Babel of thought. The Babel of thought is the result of a corrupted religion. Those who refuse to understand God soon become incapable of understanding one another. Religion is the basis upon which all true society is founded. When man lost his religion, he lost his true home and was scattered over the face of the earth. Hence we are led to conclude that while all religions which preceded that of the Hebrews were more or less derived from the religion of Noah, that is, from the patriarchal revelation, they became in no very long time so changed by the evil hearts and lives of men that they are not worth mention in the Bible. So it was, we know, in Persia, when the Magian superstitions corrupted the ancient Zendavesta. So it has been in every case. The light which is in man soon becomes darkness, and then how great is that darkness!

Notwithstanding all that the critics say about the authorship of different parts of the Book of Genesis, it



cannot be denied that the narrative is continuous, and that the great epochs which can be recognised in it are introduced in the quietest possible manner. The migration of the family of Terah is connected with the book of the generations of Shem. "Now these are the generations of Terah. . . . And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there" (xi. 27-31). There is nothing in this account of an ancient migration to indicate any special Divine agency at work in the family of Terah. The migration may have been caused by one of those movements among the nations which often in those days loosened many tribes from their places of settlement and set them on pilgrimage. History points to inroads upon the Chaldeans about that time which may account for the movement to the north-west of the Shemitic families referred to in Genesis. But, in the quietest possible way, with this tribal movement is connected a great religious epoch. "*Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*" After this general statement of the covenant with the Patriarch we have particular mention of appearances of Jehovah to him, and the rest of the Book

of Genesis is occupied with the story of Abraham's descendants. When we ask, therefore, what is included in the simple expression, "*And Jehovah said to Abram*"? we must remember that the history is a summary of many years. While Abram was amongst the Chaldees in their sacred city of Ur (or Mugheir), he received, in some way not recorded, a series of Divine communications. As the Shemite family is distinctly identified in chap. ix. 26 with the worship of Jehovah, who is called there "*the God of Shem*," we may reasonably assume that whatever communications were sent to Abram in Mesopotamia were immediately connected with the traditions handed down from Noah through the Shemite branch of his descendants. There would be a considerable amount of religious light, which we can easily imagine would in some instances be preserved by the grace of God to individuals, even amidst the corruption of the Chaldean worshippers. The ancestors of Abraham, we are told, worshipped idols, but that they might do while still retaining some of the traditions which came down from the Flood. Was Abram's call a sudden, miraculous manifestation of the Divine, or was it the work of the Spirit of God, through years, it may be, and by various agencies? The general tone of the whole Book of Genesis would lead us to conclude that while there were special appearances of God, there was also a continuous line of Divine revelation with which the special facts were connected. "*The Lord said*," points to the work of the Spirit. The election of Abram was not an isolated and arbitrary fact. None of God's elections are so. When He elects, His will is the

movement of His whole Divine nature towards an individual as being the elect of the Infinite Wisdom, the elect of the universal order, the elect of an unfolding purpose of perfect truth and love. A Divine call presupposes a Divine preparation, a Divine development, a Divine crisis. Therefore we may fairly include in the simple words of Genesis that which lies at the back of all such religious epochs—the continuous, progressive work of the Spirit of God. That the Patriarch was instructed so that he was able to recognise the grandeur of his mission as the founder of the kingdom of God afresh in the midst of the corruptions of heathenism, we cannot doubt from the solemn renewal of the Divine covenant with him, and the promise that through the religious traditions which he should hand on to his descendants all the families of the earth should be blessed. He would perfectly well understand that he was not only founding a nation, but that that nation was to be the receptacle and depositary of the religion he was being taught by the Spirit of God. It has been very justly observed by some writers that the germ of the Mosaic Law was given to Abraham. He knew that he was laying a foundation in which a great superstructure was afterwards to be built. Call him an Arab Sheik or what you will, he is the witness to special Divine communications, and therefore he is an organ of the Spirit of God. Not that Abraham is singled out in the narrative as the one only man of his age to whom God speaks and with whom He works. Far from it. The Book of Genesis rather reveals to us Divine working and speaking as common through the

world. But there is a "chosen generation" in the earth. There are "oracles of God" committed to chosen men. There is a special revelation in the midst of general revelation. Hence we conclude that the idea of Jehovah, the God of salvation, the God of the chosen men in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed, is that of God the Spirit, God inspiring men, God speaking in their minds and hearts, God bestowing upon them words which they can lay up in their memory and hand on to their successors, and which can become their Scriptures which shall "make them wise unto salvation."

The history of Abraham is that of a man more and more inspired and more and more separated from the world by Divine communications. The fifteenth chapter sets him before us as a prophet, priest, and king, the type of all the inspired men of the future. In the seventeenth chapter he is the forerunner of Moses as the mediator of the covenant sealed by the rite of circumcision, and therefore of the full revelation given to Israel. Theophany after theophany is vouchsafed to this man. He is even permitted to entertain three mysterious visitants in his tent, to one of whom he addresses himself as to Jehovah, and in holy confidence in his own inspiration he pleads with the Divine Person for the doomed city of Sodom. Such dealings of God with man, however we connect them with the subsequent teachings of Scripture or the Divine nature, certainly imply the very close fellowship of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit. Whatever we include in the term "*prophet*," it cannot be denied that Abraham occupied the position of a prophet;

that he had what we call direct intercourse with God; that he was able to put on record what God said to him as well as what he said to God; that he distinctly recognised the connection between the Word of God and the events of the world, and regulated his own life according to the Divine covenant, which was solemnly ratified between himself and his family. Dreams and visitations of God are recorded in the case of heathen kings and others who are brought into connection with the people of God. But these occasional Divine interpositions are not spoken of in the same manner as the communications, often very full and minutely related, which distinguished those who were organs of the Spirit of God. Thus we are prepared by the early records of the Book of Genesis for the subsequent dispensation, when the work of the Spirit takes the form of legislation and organised national life.

In the account of Abraham's trial in chapter xxii. it is remarkable that while the trial is sent in the name of Elohim, the deliverance is sent in the name of Jehovah. "*And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh*" (ver. 14). It was the angel of Jehovah who called to him out of heaven and renewed the covenant of blessing with him. It was in the name of Jehovah-Elohim that the Patriarch worshipped God at Beersheba, and it was with the altar of Jehovah as the centre of his little colony that he remained after the trial of his faith with Isaac restored and pledged to him as the promised seed. "Jehovah blessed Abraham in all things." "He is the God of heaven and the God of the earth," i.e., not merely

God of the physical universe, but God of peoples, of families, of earthly relationships. We cannot reconcile such a worship with any kind of religion which falls short of that developed in Mosaism. In Mosaism the Spirit of God is clearly recognised.

The whole narrative of Isaac's marriage is full of the language of faith and dependence on the God of providence. "The thing proceedeth from Jehovah," said Laban. Men who could so speak were not mere blind worshippers of an unknown God. They thought of Him as their friend and their fellowship with Him was intimate. How could it be so unless they believed that their own best impulses were from Him? He was the Life of their life. His Spirit taught and led them, and their happiness was in the harmony of earth and heaven. It is very evident that the religion which Isaac learned of his father looked both backward to the revelations of the past and forward to the fuller revelations of the future, for when Jehovah appeared to the father of the two boys Esau and Jacob among the Philistines, the promise of Divine support and blessing is renewed to him "because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charges, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (xxvi. 5); and when he returned to Beersheba, where his father had dwelt, Jehovah appeared unto him as the God of his father Abraham, and said, "Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for My servant Abraham's sake." Even the people round recognised the continued blessing of Jehovah upon Isaac and his household. We may therefore take it for granted

that the same religion, with the same beliefs, went down from father to son. Isaac was not so distinguished a man as Abraham, but he seems to have had a contemplative spirit, "going out into the field to meditate," and was certainly under the influence of a prophetic inspiration when he pronounced his blessing on his sons.

The life of Jacob is more or less an inspired life throughout. He is an inspired dreamer; he is an inspired pilgrim. At the ford Jabbok, where he acquires his new title of Prince, after his successful wrestle with the mysterious angel, he is both a man of prayer and a man of faith. Again, as his grandfather Abraham, the prophet, priest, and king in one. "I have seen God face to face," he said. He had entered, as it were, into the Holy of holies, and that not only on his own behalf, but on behalf of the two bands, which represent the whole Church of God, of which he was the high priest and ruler. The threefold character of the Patriarchs is very distinctly traceable through all the story. That threefold character of man the worshipper, what is it but the reflection on earth of the threefold personality of God—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? At Bethel, as we read in chapter xxxv., there is a very solemn renewal of Divine promises and reconsecration of the chosen spot. There can be no doubt that the record of Jacob's consecration of Bethel is intended to forecast the future solemn worship of Israel at Jerusalem; for although the place chosen as a centre might change from time to time, the main thought is that worship was centralised and fixed, and that God approved that centralisation.

Passing from Jacob to Joseph, we come into the presence of a new class of facts. First we have the dreams of Joseph, which are prophetic dreams and plainly inspired. Then we have the story of Joseph's persecutions and deliverances, culminating in the supremacy of the son of Jacob over Egypt. Jehovah is said to have been "with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man" (xxxix. 2). "The Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper." Joseph could both dream and interpret dreams, and that when all the wise men and magicians of Egypt failed, as it was in Chaldea in the case of Daniel. "It is not in me," Joseph said to Pharaoh; "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." "And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, *a man in whom the Spirit of God is?*" Would such words have been put by the sacred writer into the mouth of the king of Egypt unless the doctrine of the Spirit had been clearly recognised at that time? The wisdom and prophetic power which Joseph manifested were regarded as due to an indwelling Spirit of God. So again in the whole of the intercourse between Joseph and his brethren, and the removal of Jacob with his household to Goshen, there is the threefold character of the representative man once more set forth. He is the prophet, as holding intercourse with Jehovah and revealing His secrets; he is the priest, as praying and interceding on behalf of his family and on behalf of Egypt; he is the king, for he is the virtual ruler of the world through his supremacy in a country which at that time was the leading country of the world. The close of the forty-eighth and the forty-ninth



chapters bring us into the midst of a most lofty inspiration in the dying words of Jacob. The blessings which came down from the earliest times in small mustard-seeds of prophetic language, sown in such hearts as Jacob's, and in such wonderful experiences as his, must unfold themselves into a blossoming beauty of hope and prediction. In the twelve Patriarchs there are twelve branches on which the unfolded richness of the blessing might be distributed; and the dying words of Jacob are apocalyptic in their character. They symbolise the future development of inspired prophecy. However we may fail to justify every interpretation which may be given to the words themselves, it is quite certain that they represent the transference of Jacob's inheritance of blessing to his descendants. In time Israel is foreshadowed; not the one imperfect Jacob, but the whole people of God, in whom and with whom He will dwell—who shall be represented once more in Him who was both Son and Lord, in whom the promises shall be all fulfilled, and in whom, as God manifest in the flesh, the threefold character of Israel shall be realised—prophecy, priesthood, and royalty.

The Book of Exodus opens with a statement which reminds us at once that the remaining books of the Pentateuch are concerned with a nation rather than with a group of families. "The children of Israel" is the description of the people, and they are said to have "waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them." The national life of Israel is vividly described in the books of Moses—how it commenced, how it was ordered, how it was placed in Palestine in the sphere appointed

for it by God. No attentive reader of these books can fail to see that they ascribe everything to direct Divine teaching. Moreover, whatever authority is attached to the laws and arrangements described is not an authority made by human devices or merit, but is freely given by God to His servants. The idea of spontaneous revelation of Himself underlies the whole Mosaic economy. And the call of Moses is essentially the same as the call of Abraham. The deliverance of the people out of Egypt is a sequel to the deliverance of the Patriarchs out of their distresses. It is still the same Divine voice which speaks, and the same Divine presence which is made manifest, and the same Divine inspiration which lifts up men from their merely natural position to be heroes and conquerors and legislators and rulers and artists. But while there is continuity there is progress. We pass from genesis (beginning) to development, from families to a nation, from a shepherd life to a legal system. The name and covenant of Jehovah underlies all. The difference between Egyptian life and Hebrew life is not that the one was without religion and the other founded on religion, for the Egyptians were the most religious people of the ancient world; but the religion of Egypt was the product of man's attempts to find out God and propitiate Him; the Hebrew religion was an embodiment of special Divine revelations. Hence the Hebrew national life was the outgrowth of fellowship with Jehovah. Inspiration, in the sense of direct Divine guidance and endowment, was the presupposition of the whole Mosaic economy. The Hebrew assumes that his nation is Divine in its

origin, Divine in its constitution, Divine in its mission, and Divine in its destiny. "The nation is not a mere collection of families. It is a witness of a perpetual battle that is going on between order and disorder, right and wrong, the invisible God who is the Lord of man, and the visible things which are claiming lordship over him. The Israelite, the covenant servant of God, is to take part in this fight; he is to go forth as God's instrument in putting down corruption and oppression. When he has a commission to destroy, he is to destroy. He is to hold the sacrifice of individual life a cheap thing, for the sake of asserting the right and the truth, which some have violated. Idolatry he looks upon as the cause of all strife and degradation. He is to hate it with perfect hatred" (F. D. Maurice). How is it possible to diffuse the Divine presence in this way through national life, avoiding at the same time the error of Pantheism, except by a doctrine of the Spirit essentially the same as the Christian? Exodus gives us God in war, God in life and death, God in laws and rites and national customs, God in songs and the varied gifts of the poet, God in the private life of the people, God in their assemblies, God in the tent and in the tabernacle, God in the great men with whom He spake, God in the multitude, going with them and dwelling in their midst as their Protector and King. This intermingling of the Divine and human is only intelligible on the basis of a living communion between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man. The Pantheist simply destroys personality both in God and man. He reduces all to a dead uniformity of the Absolute; in

other words, he sees every finite object as a mere ripple on the surface of the Infinite, therefore as having no individuality. The result of Pantheism is fatalism. But there is no fatalism in the Bible. Everything is in the hands of God, and still man is free and responsible, and all things are working together for his good. Moreover, much as there is in the Law of Moses which was temporary and national, no one can study the Old Testament without recognising the distinction which is presented there between that which is Jewish and that which is human. The two tables of the Law contain some precepts which concern religious observances, but they mainly inculcate a spiritual obedience. The first and greatest of all the commandments is Love. The people were always taught that the heart itself is the true seat of God's throne. Our Saviour simply proclaimed that which is the essence of the Old Testament when He said, "God is a Spirit, and they which worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 24). It will only be necessary to refer to a few of the instances occurring in the Pentateuch where the doctrine of the Spirit is taught; but as they are so very distinct and clear, it would be doing injustice to the subject to omit them.

The whole of the account given in Exodus of the call of Moses and Aaron to their mission as deliverers of the children of Israel from Egypt (Exod. ii. 23—iv. 31) is full of significance. The people sigh and cry by reason of their bondage. God hears and remembers His covenant. "*And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them*" (took knowledge of them, ii. 25). The

prayers which went up from the afflicted people brought answers which the covenant God had promised. The doctrine of God which is included in such language is not a mere accommodation to human weakness; it is not mere anthropomorphism. It is the development of what is already to be found in the Book of Genesis. There is a distinct foundation on which the religion of the people rests. They are able in their trouble to plead before God the solemn engagements into which He entered with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. On that basis of covenant is built up the history of a Divine interposition on behalf of a people far from being in themselves worthy of such favours. The conception of a covenant involves that of fellowship between representative men and God. There is no such conception in Heathenism. We can derive the idea of Law, and therefore of Divine government, from Nature. We can conceive of intelligent creatures recognising their relation to their Creator as their Ruler without direct communications from Him. But when we rise to the thought of God and man pledged to one another in covenant, which is the clear teaching of the Book of Genesis, we have reached a conception which could never be obtained from the mere study of natural laws. A covenant is personal. Only personal beings can enter into such a relation with one another. The Creator impresses His laws upon the universe as a whole; but if He enters into covenant with any part of that universe, then it must be as Spirit with spirit, as a being willing freely and acting freely, and able to promise and perform promises with a being like Himself, free and able to enter

into an engagement for the future. Although we are not told how the religious life of the Israelites in Egypt was maintained, it is the natural conclusion which we may draw from the whole narrative that God went on holding special intercourse with individuals, and through them with the people generally, generation after generation; so that the course of supernatural events rests upon a course of supernatural spiritual communications. There were many more inspired men and women besides those whose names are mentioned. There was a true Church of God in Israel which never died out. Moses himself came forth from the midst of the house of Levi, from a family where God's Spirit had been working for ages, and the special gifts and miraculous signs which were vouchsafed to the shepherd of Jethro's flock were the working out of a long course of gracious spiritual dealings.

We cannot rightly understand the theophanies which are described in the Old Testament unless we connect them with the doctrine of progressive revelation which is taught us there. The appearances of God to individual men correspond with His revelations to them. He speaks by His Spirit in their hearts at the same time that He speaks by signs to them from without. Hence it is that the signs themselves are often so exceedingly simple. They are revelations only as they are viewed in connection with inspiration. Only inspired men could receive them, only inspired men could have put them on record; only as they are interpreted by their place in an inspired book can they be understood. "*The angel of the Lord appeared unto*

*Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.*" But Moses was prepared by a long course of spiritual teaching, by many inward and hidden signs in his spirit, for that crisis of external manifestation. "*And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses.*" We must read between these lines of an ancient narrative. Moses was not drawn to the burning bush by a mere natural curiosity. He was under the influence of the Spirit of God. He expected a sign. His mind was lifted up into the sphere of the supernatural. He saw with the eyes of his spirit what God would have him see; he heard with the ears of his spirit what God would have him hear. The natural fact, whatever it was, sinks into the background. A spiritual man is holding spiritual intercourse with God on holy ground. No one could have related such facts but Moses himself. It concerns us little to attempt to distinguish in the narrative the natural from the supernatural. What we have to deal with is the account which an inspired man gives us of his Divine call to be God's greatest servant on the earth. He tells us of signs and of words, and of angelic appearances and of his own history, distinctly resting on what he saw and heard. There is no interpretation of such language which is consistent with the whole course of the sacred story except that which presupposes personal inspiration. Moses testifies to the Spirit of God both in himself and in the people of God to whom he was sent. He does not describe the interviews which he had with Jehovah as he would mere

natural occurrences; he states the facts without entering into details, without dates and identification of places. The vision was sent him "in the mountain of God, Horeb." Moses spoke to God, and God spoke to Moses. Signs were given, and the future history of the children of Israel was made to pass before the mind of the great leader, in brief and summary form. He is reproved for his unbelief and for his unwillingness to take up his mission. But under the influence of special Divine promises and encouragements, both to himself and to his brother Aaron, he fully realises his vocation as an anointed leader, and separates himself from his father-in-law, Jethro. Evidently Moses recounts in a few words the substance of a long course of Divine communications. They were partly by means of external signs, and partly by means of spiritual influences.

It is not thought necessary to specify in what way God spoke to His servant. The formula which is employed all through the Pentateuch, "*And Jehovah said unto Moses,*" is itself a general statement of the fact that the Spirit of God was in direct fellowship with the spirit of man, so that it was as if a living voice held intercourse with the speaking prophet in ordinary exchange of human language. It is of no importance to determine whether there was in every instance any angelic appearance or human presence or not. That such appearances should be described in parts of the narrative seems to imply that there may have been a difference in the revelations, and that sometimes they were made more emphatic and impressive by outward signs, while at others they were the



result of a course of Divine instructions and impressions made upon the inner man. We cannot put a Divine manifestation behind every message and commandment recorded in the Old Testament; but we can read in the words the fact of inspiration. The holy men of old recorded what God said to them as they themselves were moved by the Holy Ghost. It was God who led the people out of Egypt. It was "Jehovah who went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light" (Exod. xiii. 21). It was the Lord who saved Israel. "And the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and His servant Moses." Their song of praise for deliverance, which was itself an inspired composition, was a song sung unto Jehovah, ascribing salvation unto Him, identifying the people with Him; and the conclusion of that elevated poem of triumph over Egypt is a prediction of a settled religious order, to which the people were being led through the wilderness, out of which the everlasting glory of the Divine kingdom should proceed. "*Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever*" (Exod. xv. 17, 18). It is easy for modern criticism to say these words are put into the mouth of Moses by the scribes of a later age. They stand where they are on the sacred page, a witness to the fact that all the later developments of Hebrew religion were the outgrowth of a Divine revelation which was continuous

from the earliest times. The chosen place and the worship of the Sanctuary, the blessings of the Divine kingdom, were promised from the beginning, and were bestowed in connection with a dispensation of the Spirit, the records of which are on the very face of the Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi.

When the history takes us to Mount Sinai, we are brought still nearer to the leading fact of the Bible—personal inspiration. “Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain.” “There were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the Mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.” “And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the Mount; and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the Mount, and Moses went up” (Exod. xxi.). Subsequently we are told of yet more distinct manifestations of the Divine presence. “Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness” (Exod. xxiv. 9, 10). And after the people’s sin, when Moses desired a special revelation of the Divine presence, that

he might be prepared to go forward to lead the people to their land, there was given to him not only a very gracious proclamation of the Divine name and covenant, but a vision of God out of the cleft of the rock, by which the faith of the great man was confirmed in the personality of God and His intimate fellowship with His people. Now what are we to make of this story of Sinai and the mysterious interviews of the Prophet with Jehovah? No candid reader of the Scriptures can hesitate to admit that there is a body of fact in the narrative, however difficult it is to us to represent it to our minds historically. There must have been long absences of Moses from the people in the heights of the mountain. There were probably signs accompanying those periods of mediation, when the high priest saw, as if in the innermost chamber of the Divine presence, signs which were adapted to produce reverence and awe and the spirit of prayer and the attitude of expectation in the minds of the people. But beyond and apart from all that was external, the most essential fact in the whole account of the Sinaitic dispensation is the direct communion of Moses with God. He is face to face with the Divine Being Himself, where no other human being was permitted to be with him. He was there not for his own sake, but as the representative and mediator of the people, and through them as the representative and mediator of the world. But the mediation of Moses is not a permanent mediation; it concerns only a temporary economy. The man is *called up* into the Mount. He is not a mediator by his own merit, but by Divine calling;

and the intercourse between Moses and Jehovah is substantially the same as that between any of the prophets and God. It is inspiration. It is the Spirit of God holding fellowship with the spirit of man. When the work of the tabernacle has to be carried out by the people, they are inspired with good feelings towards it, with generosity and self-devotion. Their natural gifts are lifted up by the Spirit of God, and the doctrine of a Divine presence in man is distinctly proclaimed by Moses. "And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the Lord hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and He hath filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; and to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. And He hath put in his heart that he may teach," &c. (Exod. xxxv. 30-35). All art, as well as all philosophy and all science, when they are traced back to their beginnings, will be found to have flowed forth from the depth of religious impulse. The whole civilisation of the world has at the back of it the thoughts of mankind about God. The central fact of ancient Israel was the Sanctuary; the central fact of the world is Religion. The inspiration which is testified in the books of Moses is not limited to Moses himself, nor to any line of men however distinguished by their office; it is the inspiration of a people who become a nation of prophets and priests, that the world might be full of the

Spirit of God. Dean Stanley has remarked upon this universality of the Divine gifts, that it characterised the theocracy from the first: "It was not a holy tribe, but holy men of every tribe, that spake as they were moved, carried to and fro, out of themselves, by the Spirit of God. The prophets, of whom this might be said in the strictest sense, were confined to no family or caste, station or sex. They rose, indeed, above their countrymen; their words were to their countrymen in a peculiar sense the words of God. But they were to be found everywhere. Like the springs of their own land, there was no hill or valley where the prophetic gift might not be expected to break forth. Miriam and Deborah no less than Moses and Barak, in Judah and in Ephraim no less than in Levi; in Tekoah and Gilead, and, as the climax of all, in Nazareth, no less than in Shiloh or Jerusalem, God's present counsel might be looked for. By this constant attitude of expectation, if one may so call it, the ears of the whole nation were kept open for the intimations of the Divine Ruler under whom they lived. None knew beforehand who would be called. As Strabo well says in his description of the Mosaic dispensation, 'All might expect to receive the gift of good dreams,' for themselves or their people, 'all who lived temperately and justly—those always, and those only.' In the dead of night, as to Samuel; in the ploughing of the field, as to Elisha; in the gathering of the sycamore figs, as to Amos, the call might come. 'Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth,' was to be the ready and constant answer. And thus, even in its first

establishment, the Theocracy, in its true sense, contained the warrant for its complete development. Moses was but the beginning; he was not, he could not be, the end. The light on his countenance faded away, and had to be again and again rekindled in the presence of the Unseen. But his appearance, his character, his teaching familiarised the nation to this mode of revelation, and it would be at their peril, and against the whole spirit of the education received from him, if they refused to receive its later manifestations, from whatever quarter. 'The Lord my God will raise up unto them a *prophet*, from *the midst* of them, of *thy brethren*, like unto me. Unto him *shall ye hearken*.' The same event, it has been truly remarked, never repeats itself in history. Yet a like event in one age is always a preparation for a like event in another, especially when the first event is one which involves the principle of the other. Moses, the expounder of the Theocracy, the founder of the Hebrew prophets, the interpreter between God on Mount Sinai and Israel in the plain below, was the necessary forerunner, became the imperfect likeness, of the last prophet of the last generation of the Jewish Theocracy. In the fullest sense might it be said to that generation, '*There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; but if ye believe not his writings, how will ye believe My words?*'" ("Lectures on the Jewish Church," vol. i. pp. 160-162).

Closely connected with the Book of Exodus, which narrates the facts of the special sanctification of Israel,

stands the Book of Leviticus, which may be called the spiritual statute-book. The whole doctrine of Sacrifice which runs through the Mosaic ritual is founded upon that of Covenant. And the idea of a covenant relation between God and man is derived from the revelation of a spiritual God. There is no such conception in Heathenism. The opening words of Leviticus connect all the details of legislation which follow with the fact of a special revelation of Jehovah to His servant Moses, who is described in Exodus as holding the position of mediator between the people and their God: "*And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,*" &c. After this general introduction the laws are announced under the simple formula, "*And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,*" which is equivalent to the common form adopted by the prophets in subsequent times, "*Thus saith the Lord.*" The book of the Law is manifestly, therefore, a book of Grace. All the commandments which became State-regulations proceeded from One who of His own free-will and loving condescension invited the representative man Moses into His presence. All the sacrifices were invitations to Divine acceptance and forgiveness, even as a high-road is an invitation to a destination which can be reached by it. So the Gospel has been described by some as the new Law. Jesus commenced His ministry with the Sermon on the Mount, which was the proclamation of His Law of spiritual life. It is impossible to study the doctrine of Sacrifice in the Old Testament without learning from it the one essential truth of the Bible, that sin is personal.

The forgiveness of sin is reconciliation between persons. The atonements which are set forth under the Old Dispensation, and which prefigure the one great atonement of the Gospel, are covenant-sacrifices, that is, not changes produced in the Divine procedure by the merit of external facts, but rather the original covenant between God and man rescued from its obscurity and defilement, the relation of the Spiritual God to His spiritual creature man, restored and preserved. The idea of living and loving intercourse between God and His people underlies the whole of Leviticus. It is simply a development of the first and greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and strength." It is worship which is offered to God because God has first declared that it is well pleasing to Him. The purification which is obtained by means of the Jewish ritual, though it is in form external, represents the purification of the heart, and therefore is spiritual in its significance. It must be remembered that whatever prescriptions of the Mosaic Law we find in Leviticus were all based upon the Law of the Ten Commandments, therefore upon the fundamental moral law; and while they looked back to the primitive revelation of God in His relation to man, they looked forward to the future development of Israel as the messengers of Divine Mercy to the world. They were in some degree laws of separation and conservation by which the people were called out from the heathen world and prepared for their mission; but they were much more than that, they were full of prophetic meaning; they were, as the Apostle Paul



reminds us, as the work of a schoolmaster leading the scholars of the Law to Christ. The Epistle to the Hebrews, taken in connection with the Book of Leviticus, must convince any candid mind that the Old Dispensation and the New are one continuous revelation of God. Is the God revealed less in fellowship with His people at one stage of His revelation than at another? Surely not. Is a father less in fellowship with his children when they are little children than when they are grown up? He speaks to them as they are able to receive His speech. But He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." To us in the full daylight of Christianity much of the Hebrew Law may seem childish. We should not be brought nearer to God by such ritualism; rather it would hide Him from us. But we cannot charge upon the Mosaic economy that it kept the world back from intercourse with God. Had the Jews been faithful to their position, they would have been, as a people, the true missionaries to preach the Gospel to all the world. They would have grown into Christianity quite naturally, as the child grows through its childish ideas and education into manhood and its vocation. But as they forfeited their position by unbelief, it was "the remnant according to the election of grace" which took up the true vocation of the people of God and gave the Divine Law to the world in the name of Jesus Christ. There was always a kernel of spiritual life in the Law of Moses. This seems to be implied in the very fact that there is a Deuteronomy in the Pentateuch; there is a second Law, which expands and explains the first, and in which the great legislator appears more

as a prophet than as a lawgiver. Indeed, the whole development of prophecy out of the Law which is traceable through the earliest books, and becomes more and more clear as Moses himself passes away and prepares for his successors, is a testimony to the spirituality of the Old Dispensation. The Law was the text-book of the prophets; they preached upon it; they corrected the popular abuses of it; they supplied its deficiencies by their personal inspiration. They held, indeed, somewhat of an independent position, but they never sought to undermine the authority of the Law, only to reveal its spirituality. It is a deeply significant fact that Moses himself was a prophet. The man who laid down all the details of Leviticus is the man who said concerning himself that the Prophet to whom all should listen, who would be the fulfilment of the Divine promises, would be a prophet like unto himself. He was pre-eminently a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, for he was face to face with God; he was man's advocate with Jehovah and Jehovah's messenger to man. He was in the innermost chamber of the Tabernacle, and yet his own tent was among the tents of the people.

The Book of Numbers carries us into the midst of a people who were beginning to order and settle their national life. The same fact of Divine intercourse with their leaders and teachers stands at the head of the book and underlies it throughout. The numbers are divinely taken. The army is divinely constituted. All the details of national life are ordered by the voice of Jehovah. The priests are consecrated in accordance

with directions given to Moses. Even the blessing which Aaron and his sons shall pronounce is prescribed, and the words of it remind us that the sun of spiritual glory was shining through the clouds of the wilderness. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put My name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them" (Num. vi. 22-27). Such a blessing was an appeal to faith. It lifted the hearts of the people to the worship of Him "who is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and in truth." When the tabernacle was "fully set up," it was "anointed and sanctified, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof." And in the fully sanctified tabernacle "the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers, who were princes of the tribes, and were over them that were numbered," brought their offerings to Jehovah. And after they had been presented as a solemn dedication of the altar, Moses "went into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Jehovah, then he heard the voice of One speaking unto him from off the Mercy-Seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim: and He spake unto him" (Num. vii. 89). Symbolical as such language is, we cannot doubt that it was intended to fix in the thoughts of the people

the fact of Divine revelation. God personally revealed Himself to Moses, and through Moses to the whole nation. As there was no form on the Mercy-Seat, but only a voice came forth from a hidden person, they would naturally conclude that the Divine presence was a spiritual presence, which could indeed manifest itself anywhere, and by any sign, but remained in itself invisible.

The consecration of seventy elders, which may be said to be a distinct advance in the national constitution, is described in Num. xi. 16, 17. The personal authority of Moses is henceforth shared by that of a council. And it is said to be an inspired council, *i.e.*, when called together and deliberating in the name of Jehovah it is promised that its decisions shall be Divinely directed and authorised. “And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.” In close connection with this appointment of a representative council which shall be specially inspired, there is, in the same chapter, a statement of fact which removes all doubt as to the character of the inspiration given to the seventy. It was not in any sense a consecration of a caste or a priesthood, or the limitation of Divine gifts to an elect number. On

the contrary, it was the result of an outpoured blessing on the people. The elders selected were selected from a much larger number of men who were known by Moses and by the people themselves to be inspired men, that is, men who were spiritual leaders by their wisdom and by their goodness. Thus we read, ver. 24-30: "And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the Lord, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the Spirit rested upon them; (and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle), and they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them! And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel." Can we doubt that this fact is put on record for the very purpose of throwing light on the nature of the office held by the seventy? They had special gifts, but those gifts were not necessarily dependent on their

official ordination at the tabernacle. They might exercise them anywhere and under any circumstances. Yea, it seems to be implied that Eldad and Medad held aloof from Moses from some disaffection towards him and his authority. And yet they might be true representatives of Jehovah in their individual inspiration. Prophets might be raised up by gifts of the Spirit apart altogether from any recognised order or centre of authority. Yea, all the people *might* be prophets. Would God that they were! Moses, in his beautiful humility and exalted faith, anticipated the day of Pentecost, when the gifts should be poured upon all flesh. The freeness of Divine grace is quite consistent with the maintenance of order and authority in the Church of God. Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses, not because they could charge him with restraining the gifts of God, and withholding opportunity from any gifted person to use his gifts. They were actuated simply by jealousy of the power given to the great lawgiver. They tried to undermine his position because they wished to exalt their own. And their rebellion was not only severely rebuked, but was made the occasion for another and more emphatic proclamation of the perfect freeness of Divine gifts, and the union of that freeness with an order of manifestation. Any one could be a prophet, but while the gifts might thus be universally bestowed, God was revealing Himself in a certain orderly manner, by the special inspiration given to one man and the special system of laws and ordinances which that one man should appoint in His name. The question which Miriam and Aaron put was the question

which Jehovah answered. "And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it. (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And He said, Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" (Num. xii. 2-9). This is a most important passage. The place of Moses is declared to be unique. His inspiration is unique. But his separation from the people is declared to be quite consistent with an outpouring of prophetic inspiration upon the people. "If there be a prophet among you;" *i.e.*, there may be at any time, in any condition. Jehovah will speak by any one of His people. But Moses is not only a prophet, not only a seer of visions and a dreamer of dreams, he is the consecrated head and leader of the House of God—not indeed the Son, as we are reminded in Hebrews, but the servant,

whose office typified and prepared for the highest revelation of God in Him who was "God manifest in the flesh." The history of the people's wanderings in the wilderness is full of facts which help us to understand the twofold dispensation of the Spirit—that which was individual and that which was immediately connected with the order of the Divine household. The rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram was very similar to that of Miriam and Aaron; it was the result of envy and jealousy of Moses, but it was an organised political conspiracy embracing two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly. The sons of Levi were at the head of it. They sought the priesthood also. They murmured against Heaven. But on what ground did they claim a share in official power? On the ground of the universal sanctification of the people. "All the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them" (chap. xvi. 3). The destruction which was sent upon the rebels was not a contradiction of what they said, but a condemnation of their spirit, which was the spirit of pride and disorder, selfishness and rebellion against the gracious Spirit of God. The "token against the rebels" which was subsequently given was the sign of grace through a consecrated priesthood, which was developed in the ages which followed in the whole Levitical system. "Aaron's rod budded and blossomed, and yielded almonds." The fruitfulness of the priestly service was still for the sake of the people. The consecration was not an arbitrary election, it was a separation unto distribution. As it was with Israel itself, so it was



with the Israelitish priesthood. They were set apart in order that they might be distributors of the blessing to the world. Aaron's garments were solemnly put upon his son, when his office was coming to an end by death. The office of a priest is such that it necessarily involves external distinctions; but such signs of special authority were not channels of grace in themselves, otherwise it would not have been necessary for Moses to strip Aaron and put the priestly garments on Eleazar his son, according to Divine commandment. Plainly the garments themselves were mere symbolical badges of office. They passed with the office. Personal inspiration still remained clearly distinguished from official position and dignity.

The introduction of Balaam the son of Beor, who seems to have occupied a very high position among his own people, both as a soothsayer and as a prince, brings before us the very instructive fact that there were acknowledged Divine oracles in heathen nations, and that they were not entirely separate from those which were consulted by the Israelites. "Balak, king of the Moabites, sent to Balaam to Pethor, which is by the river, to the land of the children of his people." The account given us in Num. xxii.-xxiv. of the remarkable communications given to Balaam by Jehovah leaves us in no doubt that, at least for the time being, the Midianite prophet was under special Divine inspiration. The movements of the man are Divinely directed. He is impelled and restrained by God. His cursing is turned into blessing. "Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver

and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more. Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more" (vers. 18, 19). However we interpret the story of the angel and the ass speaking with the voice of a man, it is certain that the intention of it, as placed in the history of Israel, is to represent Balaam as under the inspiration and special guidance, at the time, of Jehovah. If we understand the words in chap. xxiii. 7 to mean that the prophet came from Mesopotamia, from the mountains of the East; and if Pethor was a city of Mesopotamia, then we may conclude that Balaam was not very remotely connected with the ancestors of the Israelites. His knowledge of Divine truth may have come from primitive sources. Like Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, he may have been the representative of the earliest traditions of true religion. But that he was a soothsayer to some extent appears in the narrative (see chap. xxiv. 1). Yet he was inspired with words of prophecy, which were not merely grand poetic utterances, but filled with the light of Hebrew faith. The last of his "parables," as they are called, which is very solemnly given as under the rapture of special inspiration, is universally acknowledged to be a sublime prophecy of the future glory of Israel, and by some of the greatest writers on the Old Testament is regarded as a prediction of the Messiah. "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and

destroy all the children of Sheth." Such an episode in the history of Israel points to the fact that the Spirit of God wrought in others besides those who were acknowledged prophets in the Mosaic economy. There was inspiration elsewhere than in the chosen nation. Such inspiration, as we see, was sporadic and fragmentary. But it was taken up into the whole body of Divine truth. It contributed its scattered rays to the total illumination which was at last gathered in all its fulness into the Sun of Righteousness. The position of such a man as Balaam is easily to be distinguished from that of a prophet amongst the people of God who were in covenant relation with Him. Such a character as his is not found among the prophets of Israel. He was employed by God for the special purposes described in the narrative, and for those purposes he received Divine communications. But he was not a commissioned messenger to Israel. Yet it is important to establish by this case the principle that the personal character and position of the prophet through whom a communication is made from God do not of themselves explain the fact of the special communication. However devout and lofty-minded a man may be, whatever insight he may have into truth, however much developed his religious consciousness may be, he is not capable of prophesying in the stricter sense of the word, that is, of giving to the world words which have come directly from God, unless he is inspired with those words by an immediate act of the Holy Spirit. And it is possible that in peculiar circumstances, of which we are not in a position to judge, God may send direct messages

to the world through men who are only inspired for the time being. We can scarcely doubt that Balaam was a man of great natural gifts, that he was a poet, that he was a man deeply versed in the learning of his age, and perhaps acquainted with the traditions preserved among the Hebrews; and it is probable that such natural and acquired gifts made him the more suitable for the Divine purposes. Bishop Butler and others have regarded him as kicking against conscience and resisting grace. At least we may recognise in him the working of the Divine Spirit. And we, therefore, separate such exceptional instances from the systematic development of Divine revelation which is described in the Scriptures.

Closely connected with the mission of Moses stands that of Joshua, his successor as the leader of Israel, though not his successor in every gift. The very emphatic way in which his ordination is mentioned shows that the people were well accustomed at that time to the ideas which are embodied in ordination. They understood that Joshua was an inspired man, that he was chosen by God and not by Moses, that he was officially set apart because in answer to the earnest prayers of Moses the people should not be left as sheep having no shepherd. The hand of Moses was laid upon him, not because there was any mysterious power in the rite itself, but because God would have all the people clearly and without doubt recognise the personal and official inspiration of Joshua. It is to God as the God of spirits that Moses addresses himself, and it is by the Holy Spirit that Joshua is gifted for his office. "And Moses spake unto the Lord,

saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd. And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before the Lord: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. And Moses did as the Lord commanded him; and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: and he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge; as the Lord spake by the hand of Moses" (Num. xxvii. 18-23). We must carefully notice that Joshua is an inspired man before his ordination. He is chosen to be the successor of Moses because he has proved his fitness. Like Caleb, he had "wholly followed the Lord." But the ordination was for the sake of the people. It was public; it was official; it was before the high priest; it was in the presence of the Lord in His sanctuary. We cannot doubt that there was special blessing upon Joshua after his ordination; but no word is said to imply that the

ceremony, whatever it was, as a ceremony contained and conveyed the blessing. The act of fellowship with Jehovah and with His people was a spiritual act. Joshua and Moses and the high priest and the whole witnessing assembly were, in their act of prayer and in their loving communion with God, filled with the Spirit of God. The blessing is not a mechanical process. It is the life of the Spirit quickening the soul. But however we may regard ordination, the fact that there was an ordination of Joshua is very instructive. No one can fail to see that the doctrine of the Spirit was before the minds of God's people even in that early age, and that it was substantially the same doctrine as that which is now held by Christians.

The Book of Deuteronomy may be described as a series of farewell discourses delivered by the lawgiver Moses in view of his speedy departure and in preparation for the invasion of Canaan by the second generation of Israelites. There must of necessity be a large amount of repetition in it of what was before given to a previous generation. But every one must be impressed on reading it with its lofty spiritual tone. It is an appeal to heart and soul. It is a solemn enforcement of commandments on the basis of covenant. It is a retrospect and prospect, as in the presence of the faithful God, who is both righteous in punishing sin and gracious in forgiving it. One of the most conspicuous features of the whole book is the representation of the life of Israel as between the two mounts of cursing and blessing. The Law is not a mere letter, it is a spirit. It is to be written on the man

himself, and it is "in his mouth and in his heart." The grand songs with which the addresses of Moses conclude, given in chaps. xxxii. and xxxiii., are themselves sufficient to lift up the whole book into a higher sphere. They are wonderful outpourings of inspired praise and prayer, appeal and prophecy, and they are full of the Holy Ghost, and of the promise of His guidance and quickening for all the tribes of Israel. But there is one passage which occurs in the middle of the book which has been made use of by the writers of the New Testament and applied both to our Lord Himself and to the dispensation of the Gospel. It is necessary that we should consider it in its place in the Old Testament. After Moses has warned the people against the abominations of the Pagan nations which at that time dwelt in Palestine and the neighbourhood, and especially against their practice of soothsaying and divination, and the various forms of degraded spiritualism, the promise is given of Divine communications through appointed and inspired prophets. The idea seems to be that of a continuous line of messengers culminating in one supreme Messenger of the Covenant, in whom all prophets shall find their antitype and perfection. The words are these (chap. xviii. 15-22): "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more,

that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken; the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." The general scope of this passage is plain upon the face of it. It is the promise of a continual and authorised inspiration. When Moses is taken away there shall be one like him taken as he was from among the people. He should be able to show that his word was Divinely given by fulfillments of predictions. His declarations of Divine commandments should be on the same level of constituted law as the words of Moses himself. Now, such a promise could not have been given by Moses on the ground of mere personal inspiration. If he had meant no more than this, that from time to time men should arise who were evidently inspired, he could not have put the promise in the solemn form in which he expresses it.



Evidently the reference is to what afterwards is explained by facts, to the mission of prophets as part of the Mosaic economy. The Law was not complete without the one who came as special expounder of it and of the promises which were contained in it. The words of Moses were an anticipation of that constitution of the prophetic office, which we shall see was the development subsequently reached in the time of Samuel. No doubt the promise looked still further. No Moses returned in the line of messengers until He came who was not the servant but the Son. But the chief bearing of the passage on the doctrine of the Spirit is the very emphatic recognition in it of an inspiration identified with a Divine authority. We could not suppose that Moses was directed to condemn to death those who did not believe what a man of genius or of specially devout spirit might utter under Divine influence. The condemnation lay in distinct rejection of Jehovah's undoubted authority. The connection of that authority with prediction and the fulfilment of it removes all obscurity from the passage. The signs must be given; otherwise the prophet cannot claim obedience. The signs themselves are not such as appeal merely to intellectual or emotional or even moral convictions alone, but to knowledge of God's methods, to a line of approved evidences, to the course of revelation, to the Law, and to the testimony. If the prophet is convicted of false signs and of contradiction of the Word of God, it is because there is no true light in him.

The Book of Joshua is thus described by Mr. Bullock in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible":—"An awful

sense of the Divine Presence reigns throughout. We are called out from the din and tumult of the battle-field to listen to the still small voice. The progress of events is clearly foreshadowed in the first chapter (vers. 5 and 6). Step by step we are led on through the solemn preparation, the arduous struggle, the crowning triumph. Moving everything around, yet himself moved by an unseen Power, the Jewish leader rises high and alone amid all." After the narrative of events, as in Deuteronomy, discourses are given, which the people were called together to hear from their leader before he was taken from them. And the high spiritual tone of Joshua's farewell discourses shows that the people who listened to them, notwithstanding that they were a nation of warriors, and were passing through a fighting period of their history, well understood their distinction and separation from the nations around them, and their heart and soul service of Jehovah. The book of the Law is the foundation on which they rest. When they solemnly renewed their covenant with Jehovah, Joshua wrote a full account of their public dedication of themselves in the book of the Law of God, and set up a great stone as a memorial "under an oak that was by the sanctuary of Jehovah." The tabernacle was set up previously in Shiloh after the land had been subdued, and the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled there. Such facts, together with the pervading tone of the book, which is that of humble dependence on Divine guidance and inspiring energy, show very clearly that communion with Jehovah was

the leading conception in the religious life of Israel. No doubt, at that early period there was much crudeness in their minds, especially as they were involved in a terrible struggle with the Canaanitish nations, which to some extent must have hindered the growth of higher thoughts. But the influence which such men as Joshua and Caleb had on them shows that they acknowledged the truths which had come down to them from their fathers. "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel" (Josh. xxiv. 31).

During the long period represented by the Books of Judges and Ruth to the time of Samuel, probably some two hundred and fifty years, though the chronology is so confused that most critics give it up as an insoluble problem, amidst all the disorder and conflict of a transition time, there are yet indications of a continuous Divine visitation vouchsafed to Israel. The angel of Jehovah came again and again, and the people repented of their unfaithfulness when they were reminded of the past, and of the covenant in which their fathers had joined. The judges who were sent to deliver the people when, by their defection from Jehovah, they had fallen under the power of their enemies, are said to have been inspired by the Spirit of Jehovah (see Judges iii. 10-15). Deborah is a prophetess, dwelling under a palm-tree in sacred isolation, and almost worshipped by the people for the extraordinary powers bestowed upon her. Her song of triumph over Sisera, however mingled it is with

military feeling from which we shrink, is yet an ascription of praise to Jehovah, and has much of the spirit of prophecy in it. The story of Gideon is full of the supernatural and of Divine interposition. The warrior is a humble instrument in the hands of Jehovah, and is encouraged by miraculous signs. We are still, as in the Book of Moses, listening to the voice of God. Everything is done in the presence of Jehovah. Even the evil spirit which rose up between Abimelech and the men of Shechem is ascribed to Divine appointment (chap. ix. 22). The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah (chap. xi. 29), and the whole history of the hero Samson (chaps. xiii.—xvi.) is full of the thought that physical qualities rest upon a spiritual foundation. “The child grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.” “And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them.” “And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.” Samson prayed to the Lord, and was heard. And when his strength was gone it was the Lord that had departed from him. His final effort and overthrow of his enemies in his own fall was the result of a wrestling prayer for a blessing. “And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once revenged of the Philistines for my two eyes” (chap.

xvi. 28). It is not only in individual instances, such as the heroes and judges, that we recognise the faith of the people in special Divine guidance and inspiration, but as the book concludes, the House of God at Shiloh comes prominently before us as the rallying-place of the nation when they cry for help and direction from God. "And the children of Israel arose, and went up to the House of God, and asked counsel of God" (chap. xx. 18). "And the children of Israel went up and wept before the Lord until even, and asked counsel of the Lord." "Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up and came unto the House of God, and wept, and sat there before the Lord, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord" (chap. xx. 23-26). And the Book of Ruth, which at one time formed part of the Book of Judges, bears witness to a simple dependence on the blessing of Jehovah prevailing among the people and producing very beautiful character, and attracting even a Moabite woman to forsake her own kindred and land to dwell in the midst of Israel.

This rapid review of the first eight books of the Old Testament suffices to prove that there was a considerable body of truth revealed to man from the beginning, and specially entrusted to Abraham and his fleshly descendants in their covenant relation to Jehovah. Had we no other Bible than the Pentateuch and the three books which follow it, we should certainly learn from them that God is a Spirit, and that the true worship is spiritual worship. The intercourse which is there described between

God and man is totally different from that which could be derived from the religions of heathen nations. The Divine personality is vividly represented as both conscious and human, while at the same time it is absolutely free from sin. Anthropomorphism there certainly is, but it is the assurance to us that God and man are personally alike, and therefore capable of fellowship. In the fact, which underlies all the Mosaic system, of the moral government of God, there is involved the doctrine of the Spirit. A moral Ruler can only communicate with His subjects spiritually. As they must be capable of being influenced by moral facts, He must be a Being who sends forth moral influence from Himself upon them. The Old Testament, while full of the idea of law and government, is at the same time a record of grace. From the beginning God is sending forth His love as redeeming and renewing power. Man is invited into the relation of faith which is obedience by love. The story of Israel is the story of Divine grace given to a portion of mankind for the sake of the whole. Hence, when we ask what is the doctrine of inspiration which we gather from those early books of Scripture, the answer is twofold. It is a doctrine of personal and individual inspiration, but it is also a doctrine of systematised inspiration. The Spirit of God inspires such men as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and many others whose wisdom or achievements or excellence of any kind is ascribed to special gifts. But beyond that record of individual bestowment there is the whole course of Israel's training to be the depository of a special revelation for

the salvation of the world. In a certain sense we may say Israel was an inspired nation; they were called a "holy people" because they were set apart as ministers to mankind. They possessed a position which was given them by Divine interposition; they were constituted a nation by laws which were dictated by inspiration; they had among them a body of men, the priests, who were consecrated by a Divine unction, and were therefore inspired with authority as representatives, and, in respect of worship, mediators between the people and God; their rulers were theocratic rulers, that is, they were simply officers under God, a ministry who were executive but not legislative, working the supreme Will of Him who was the only true Ruler of the nation; and, lastly, they were visited from time to time by men whose inspiration was that of the Word, who were the expounders of the Law, interpreters of the Mind of Jehovah, connecting together, by special Divine enlightenment, the Will of God as set forth in His written Word, and that same Will as enforced in the providential course of the world. At first, it would seem as though the great personality and work of Moses, who was pre-eminently a prophet, rendered it unnecessary to define the prophetic office and ministry more fully. But when ages had gone by and the nation began to grow accustomed to the fixed regulations of the Mosaic system, then the inspiration of teachers and interpreters of the Law, and messengers directly from God, came to be thought of more prominently. Just as, when Israel was carried away to a heathen land in their captivity, they

set up synagogue worship in defect of a temple ritual, and maintained their religion by a development of the prophetic office, so, after their settlement in Canaan, when the Mosaic system was becoming more formal and less spiritual, the counteraction of that growing formality was supplied by the rise of the prophets, not as rare visitors, sent here and there and after long intervals, but as a body of inspired teachers and spiritual judges, amongst whom from time to time some rose to great distinction, and their ministry left behind it the words of inspiration which were added to the books of Scripture. The broad outlines of the fully developed theocracy are all laid down in the first eight books of the Old Testament. The Spirit of God is there "moving" the holy men of God. The structure of the written Word is built up course upon course. Each age depends upon those which went before it. Each wing of the great Temple has its foundation-stones. It is the same Spirit which lives and moves and breathes in all the vast variety of style and language, thought and experience; which is now the historian and then the psalmist, now the preacher and then the seer—but always the Spirit of God in loving fellowship with the spirit of man.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM THE TIME OF SAMUEL TO THE CLOSE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON.

THE thirty-one books of Scripture which follow the Book of Ruth, from the first Book of Samuel to the Book of Malachi inclusive, contain a vast variety of sacred composition, history, poetry, moral exhortation, philosophy, proverbial sayings, and the remains of the public utterances of inspired prophets, together with short songs and prayers here and there introduced into the history. It is quite possible, and seems highly probable, that some of the poetry is very ancient, going back to the patriarchal age, possibly even to the time before the Flood. But it is not necessary to enter upon critical questions here. We have to review this mass of Hebrew literature simply to put together the teaching which is found in it on the subject of the Divine Spirit. And in doing so, it is possible only very briefly to indicate the main points of light which lie along the course of the progressive revelation.

At the opening of the first Book of Samuel an instance of personal inspiration comes before us which is full of significance. Hannah, the wife of Elkanah of Ramathaim-zophim, of Mount Ephraim, is the mother of the

prophet Samuel, and herself a prophetess. She is a praying woman. "She continued praying before the Lord." "She spake in her heart; only the lips moved, but her voice was not heard." From the fact that Eli thought she was drunken, we may conclude that there was some excitement in her manner. She was probably in a prophetic ecstasy. By her fervent prayers she obtained the blessing from Jehovah, and in the spirit of a prophetess she consecrated her child as a Nazarite unto the Lord. The lofty poetry which is called Hannah's prayer, given in 1 Sam. ii. 1-10, is one of the most inspired compositions in the Old Testament. That it was esteemed so by the Jews themselves we can see in the many imitations of it in subsequent times, and especially in the "Magnificat" of the Virgin Mary. Indeed, so wonderful are the words as coming from the lips of a simple woman like Hannah, that modern critics have propounded the theory of additions and amplifications in later times upon a very scanty basis of an original song, in which the mother praised Jehovah for His mercy to her. But such a suggestion only confirms the truth. Hannah could not have sung such words without the Spirit of God. It is quite in accordance with what we have gathered from the preceding books that such inspiration should be given, apart altogether from official qualifications, to a humble woman, to a praying mother. What we have to remember is the fact that for ages God had been speaking to Israel, not only by such men as Moses and the elders who were with him, but by numbers, no doubt, whose names are not mentioned

in the record, and with Him there is no respect of persons. There were words of prophecy which the people treasured in their hearts and repeated to one another. The insight which is given to us by the narrative of Hannah's devout life—going up with her husband from time to time to Shiloh “to sacrifice unto Jehovah of Hosts,” and praying before the Lord—into the religious condition of Israel at that time, is very full of significance. While there was a great deal of disorder, and perhaps in the people generally a state of religious knowledge little raised above heathenism, there was still a “remnant according to the election of grace.” There was a work of the Spirit in the few here and there out of which went forth the continuous stream of higher life which reveals itself in the Scriptures. The first three verses of Hannah's song proceed from her individual point of view, but the remaining seven verses are evidently on a much higher plane, where the hopes of Israel as the chosen people are in view: “*The pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed.*” We can scarcely doubt that the singer of such words was familiar with the Pentateuch and the whole body of covenant deeds and words on which the life of Israel rested. Hannah is a true prophetess in that sense that she has

drunk deeply into the spirit of the true Israel, and saw the world built up on the pillars which went down through her forefathers to the first beginnings of creation. And if Hannah could be such a prophetess, why not any other woman in Israel? If her words are put into the Bible as part of Divine revelation, what a testimony is thus given to the free grace of God even in the midst of all the limitations of that old economy!

Samuel himself is another instance of the same kind. It is true that he is brought up at Shiloh, within the precincts of the tabernacle, and is therefore a priest almost from his birth. But he was not of the family of Aaron, and it is doubtful if he was even a Levite. And he is called by Jehovah at so early an age that we cannot suppose there was any other qualification in him except that of a meek and gentle disposition, and the sense of a holy vocation. He inherited, no doubt, something of his mother's qualities, and breathed from his earliest infancy the atmosphere of a temple and of worship, but his call was evidently the call of grace. "He grew on from year to year in favour both with the Lord and also with men." Old Eli loved him, and would give him instruction and surround him with influences by which his young spirit would be led up into the higher life of religion as he was able to receive them. But whatever natural superiority there was in Samuel, and however much we ascribe to the circumstances in which he was placed, there still remains the fact that while still a child the special revelation recorded in 1. Sam. iii. came to him. In 1 Sam. ii. 27-36 we read of a man of God

coming to Eli, and his Divine message is recorded at length. It is a very remarkable prophecy, especially in the concluding words: "*And I will raise Me up a faithful priest who shall do according to that which is in Mine heart and in My mind; and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before Mine Anointed for ever.*" Such communications, without even a name of the prophet attached to them, plainly indicate a widespread work of the Spirit of God in those days, notwithstanding the fearful corruption which prevailed even in the priesthood. But we are told that "*the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision*" (1 Sam. iii. 1). The grace of inspiration was not uncommon, but direct messages from God were rare.

By "*open vision*" can be meant nothing more than widely spread vision; that is, prophets were not sent as frequently and as abundantly as in subsequent times, or even in the time of Samuel after the institution of the schools of the prophets. Samuel's first revelation from God was not given to him in ecstasy or in any abnormal state of mind. Nor, indeed, if we take the narrative literally, was it by a vision. Although the first call which prepared the boy's mind for what followed may have been sent through a vision in sleep, there is no dream-like mistiness in the narrative of what he saw and heard when the Lord appeared. "*So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And Jehovah came; and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for Thy servant heareth.*" The revelation given to the boy was only the beginning of a long

course of special Divine communications. “*And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.*” Nothing could more plainly say that personal and official inspiration were united in this instance. Samuel was filled with the Spirit of God, and he was selected by God to be the organ of a great spiritual reformation in Israel, leading and guiding others and establishing institutions whereby the word of God should be diffused through the land. Like Moses, he was at the same time the ruler of Israel and their spiritual guide and representative before Jehovah. The three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King were frequently united in the same person. Indeed, the consecration of the priesthood, like the consecration of the kings after the time of Samuel, was only the consecration of *primi inter pares*. There never was any sanction of priestcraft among the Jews, so far as their Divine instructions were concerned. If the priests assumed to themselves power which did not properly belong to their office, they had no warrant for such assumptions in the Word of God. Samuel was a great religious reformer. He called upon the people through all the house of Israel “to put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among them, and to prepare their hearts unto Jehovah, and serve Him only.” “Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth

and served Jehovah only. And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto Jehovah. And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against Jehovah. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.” “And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto Jehovah our God for us, that He will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto Jehovah; and Samuel cried unto Jehovah for Israel, and Jehovah heard him.” “And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the Lord” (1 Sam. vii. 8, 15-17). This union of offices in one man shows us very clearly that the separation of the offices in subsequent times was only a matter of convenience for their better fulfilment. The man who was full of the Spirit of God could be prophet, priest, and king in one, for there is no real separation in the functions; they are all alike functions of the Spirit. The man who is inspired of God is a ruler by his inspiration, is a prophet because the Spirit speaks through him, is a priest because he stands before God and offers up prayer for the people; for mediation is the fundamental fact of the whole Jewish religion. Whatever any man was, he was as between God and His people, and therefore was in some sense

a mediator. Samuel's conduct when the people were determined to establish a monarchy and be like the neighbouring nations was a testimony to the theocratic constitution of Israel, and therefore to the Spirit of God. Whatever is done, he said, must be done by God. His Spirit is our real Ruler. The people evidently understood this. They consulted Samuel as a seer upon everything. What the Lord "*told him in his ear*" was accepted as law. The "desire of Israel" is on Saul as the first of the kings, because Samuel declared that he was the Lord's anointed. "And Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" (1 Sam. x. 1). This anointing of Saul is accompanied with signs of the Spirit. "Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them; and they shall prophesy: and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee" (1 Sam. x. 5-7). So we read, Saul prophesied because the Spirit of God came upon him. Again and again the Spirit of God came upon Saul. He became a mighty warrior and a great monarch. There was the same union of office in him as in Samuel. His disobedience was punished, because he took upon himself to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings at an improper time, when he should have waited for Samuel; but he was



not prohibited from acting as a priest, if there should be any necessity. At the same time, the formal establishment of the kingdom, the order and constitution of which were written by Samuel and laid up before the Lord, naturally led to the separation of offices as a matter of convenience. From the time of David, Saul's successor, the prophets, priests and kings, are more distinct in the fulfilment of their functions, but it was still "*one and the self-same Spirit*" which worked in all. It is the word of Jehovah on which they all alike stood. Saul's rejection and David's consecration are very closely connected with the work of the Spirit. David is the Lord's anointed. "*The Lord looketh on the heart.*" "*The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.*" "*But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him*" (1 Sam. xvi. 13, 14). Saul's consultation of the witch of Endor, in the extremity of his distresses, sets forth, by way of contrast, the word of God as distinguished from lying oracles. The kings were divinely guided so long as they recognised the Divine Spirit. When they turned aside from the oracles of God, God forsook them and they perished. The visit of Saul to the witch at Endor is the more emphatic witness against him, inasmuch as he had himself "*put away those that had familiar spirits and the wizards out of the land;*" in other words, had proclaimed the unlawfulness of his own action beforehand. "*And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams nor by Urim, nor by prophets*" (1 Sam. xxviii. 6). He could learn nothing from priests or prophets, and his own

personal inspiration was gone because he had resisted the Spirit of God. Such an instance as Saul, pronounced and solemn as it is, connects the work of the Spirit with the moral nature and with the life of man. Inspiration is not a mechanical distribution of forces apart from the co-operation of the recipient. Men are not mere conductors of spiritual influence. The Spirit of God and the spirit of man are in vital fellowship with one another. That fellowship can be broken. One who was inspired can be forsaken. One who was made a king by the Spirit of God may sink down through his own unfaithfulness into the pit of destruction.

With the history of King David we enter upon something like a new era, in the course of Divine revelation. Again we find the three functions of the life of the inspired man represented as united in the one man David. By the Spirit of God he is a prophet, and pours out a very rich stream of inspired language in his psalms and other poetic compositions; by the Spirit of God he is a priest, and when he brought the ark of the Lord into his city, and "set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it," he "offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of Hosts;" and by the same Spirit of God he rules over Israel and becomes the greatest warrior of his time, extending his kingdom to Mesopotamia, and becoming a type of that King to whom all the kingdoms and nations of the earth shall

be subject, and in whom they shall all be blessed. The enlargement of the tabernacle into the temple and the formal constitution of the Jewish priesthood and religious ritual may be said to be the outcome of David's inspiration. It was his devotion to Jehovah which he expressed in his grand aims and plans. Nathan the prophet said to the king, "Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee." Everything which was subsequently accomplished in the preparation for Solomon's temple, in the musical and ritual arrangements, in the ordering of the priesthood, and in the composition of psalms and songs for the people to use in their worship, was done under the guidance of the Spirit of God. Nathan and Gad, David's friends, recognised prophets in Israel, gave him the messages which God sent to them by visions and otherwise. He implicitly obeyed them. Although far from perfect himself in his conduct throughout, David was pre-eminently an inspired man. Like Moses and Samuel, he initiated a new period in the history of Israel. Moses brought the people out of bondage and set them on their way as a nation. Samuel appeared at the crisis of a great degeneracy, when a long continuance of confusion and strife and disorder had almost destroyed the very foundations of their national life, bringing in a wonderful religious reformation, and therewith, as always, a civil reformation as its fruit. And David, standing on the ruins of the monarchy which had fallen with Saul, was filled with the Spirit of God, that he might restore the whole edifice of the nation and place it upon firm foundations of regal government and established religious

service. The songs which are included in the historical narrative in 2 Sam. xxii. and xxiii. may have been selected from collections of sacred poetry and inserted in their place in the history by later writers. But they bear witness to the fact that David was full of the spirit of prophecy. Even if he did not actually compose those songs himself, that they should be attributed to him is an evidence of the general belief of the people that he was capable of such productions. He was "*the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel.*" And he said, "*The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me*" (2 Sam. xxiii. 1-3). His dying words to his son Solomon testified to his desire in all things to be guided by the Spirit of God. "Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself; that the Lord may continue His word which He spake concerning me" (1 Kings ii. 3, 4).

The royal life of Solomon commences with a very decided recognition of his dependence upon Jehovah. "I am but a little child. I know not how to go out or come in. And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people whom Thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give, therefore, Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is

able to judge this Thy so great a people?" (1 Kings iii. 7-9). Again we find the union of the three offices in one man, and it is the more remarkable in the case of Solomon, because in his time the prophetic and priestly functions were very distinctly recognised and solemnly fulfilled. But not only does Solomon receive a prophetic dream, in which he is assured of special inspiration, a wise and understanding heart, so that there should be none like him, before or after him (*i.e.*, among those holding a similar position), but he immediately goes to Jerusalem and "stands before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offers up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and makes a feast to all his servants" (1 Kings iii. 15). Solomon's wisdom becomes the talk of the world. "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom" (1 Kings iv. 29-34). The instances are given which exemplify both the wisdom which Solomon had

and the confidence which the people of his own and other nations showed towards him as an inspired man. His prayer at the consecration of the temple is one of the sublimest compositions in any language in the world; and the Queen of Sheba expressed the feeling of multitudes, no doubt, at that time. "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice" (1 Kings x. 8, 9). This conspicuous example of Divine teaching and inspiration was accompanied with a very widespread diffusion of blessings amongst the people generally. It was the period of the nation's greatest prosperity and fame—the Augustan age of Israel. And it is highly probable that to that age we owe a large amount of the sacred poetry which is gathered together in the Psalms. So long as Solomon continued faithful to Jehovah the glory of his kingdom was maintained, but prosperity was in the case of Israel, as in so many other instances, the temptation before which the people fell. The sin which divided the nation and led to its ultimate ruin took its root in the time of peace, when the hearts of the people became uplifted, and they forsook the Lord to go after strange gods. When institutions decay and the normal life of a people becomes corrupt, the action of that good which still remains undestroyed is concentrated in individuals and narrowed into smaller spheres. But this is often the method by which the restoration of

the people is brought about. The channel of Divine influence is lessened in width, but the force of the stream is greater, because the influence itself is deeper and more personal. The period which followed the division of the nation into Israel and Judah, and the growing idolatry of both kingdoms, was the period marked by the rise of great prophets, whose ministry was a reforming ministry, and whose messages have been handed down to us full of the Spirit of God. The Scriptures, which have proceeded from the Jewish people from the time of David onwards, may be regarded, for our purpose, under two divisions; those which we find in the Hagiographa and the writings of the prophets. It is not possible to arrange these writings, chronologically, with any degree of certainty. Very few of the Psalms, for instance, can be referred to any date. The Book of Job, Solomon's Song, Ecclesiastes, and the collection of the Proverbs, must remain the battle-ground of critics. But it is of no great importance in putting together the testimony of the books themselves to be able to clear away these critical difficulties. We ask, what was the doctrine of the Spirit, which came down through the ages to the time of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was adopted by Him as the doctrine of the Jewish Scriptures? Let us, therefore, first look at the group of writings which we find in the Hagiographa, the Book of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, and then, secondly, take in their order those writings which in our own English Bible are classed together as the writings of the prophets. Some of these latter books, as Daniel,

may have been differently placed by the Jewish Rabbis, but this division will best serve our purpose ; and we have now to inquire what is the teaching of these two different groups of writings on the subject of the Spirit of God and His work amongst men.

*The Book of Job* contains poetry of the very highest order and is full of profound moral teaching, but its most striking feature is, that it represents different men and different characters, under the influence of spiritual impulse, pouring forth their different speeches, and the Divine Being Himself as following their imperfect utterances with His own word in answer to them, and as supplementing that which is imperfect in them. It is taken for granted throughout the book that God is very near to man, and can speak to him at any time and by different ways. Eliphaz the Temanite refers to a vision by night. "Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face ; the hair of my head stood up ; it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof : an image was before mine eyes ; there was silence, and I heard a voice saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God ?" &c. (Job iv. 12-16). Bildad the Shuhite invites Job to inquire into the records of the past and learn how God has taught our fathers. "For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow." That is, we cannot be satisfied with our own



thoughts as individuals, but we inquire of antiquity. "The fathers:" "Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?" (chap. viii. 10). When Job declares that he knows the lessons of the past, and is as deep in the knowledge of the fathers as his friends can wish him to be, yet he is not comforted, and his reason is not satisfied;—Zophar the Naamathite wishes that there might be some special revelation sent from God to convince Job of his ignorance. "But oh that God would speak, and open His lips against thee; and that He would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is!" (that is, to what has yet been revealed). That is true, replied Job, but it is not the secrets of wisdom that I want to know, but simply my own transgressions, and why I am suffering. The friends still reproach the Patriarch, thinking that he meant to justify himself in a self-righteous spirit, and believing that he suffered because he was guilty. And Job bursts out with a cry for pity and an assertion of faith. He knows that he is a child of God, and that he shall see God hereafter. His Redeemer liveth. He has the witness of the Spirit of God with him, "the root of the matter" in him, as he says. The controversy between the friends is followed by what is called Job's parable and the long speech of Elihu, the young man. The magnificent episode in praise of Wisdom, which is found in the twenty-eighth chapter, and which reminds us of similar language in the Book of Proverbs and in the Apocrypha, implies a doctrine of Divine teaching by means of spiritual communications deeper than any

search of human thoughts or of human enterprise. And the interposition of the young man amongst his elders is distinctly justified on the ground of inspiration. "I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you my opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a Spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I said, Harken unto me; I also will show mine opinion" (chap. xxxii. 6-10). The key to Elihu's thought is that of personal inspiration. God may give to man "a messenger, an interpreter, one among a thousand." He may enlighten him and comfort him and make him afresh. He calls upon Job to "stand still and consider the wondrous works of God," to humble himself before Him whom, with all his searching, man cannot find out. And the book ends with that wondrous colloquy between God and His servant, in which the Almighty bids man trust in Him as the infinitely great and wise and good, and Job confesses his insignificance and dependence. Although the Book of Job is plainly not from the standpoint of the Mosaic economy, it yet harmonises with it. The Spirit of God is conversing with the spirit of man, and the creature is lifted up into perfect reconciliation with the holy and heart-searching God. On the foundation of a Divine justification man's prosperity is seen to rest, and thus the dialogue is brought into relation with the whole progressive revelation of the Old Testament. But it

must be admitted that there is a certain rhetorical fullness in this remarkable book, and a repetition in it, which seem to indicate its origin outside the strictly canonical limits. It may, as we now have it in the Old Testament, have received certain amplifications due to a late age. Any way, it is not inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture as a whole. We would lay no very great stress on it. The general idea of it, that of the Divine discipline and the perfection of God's ways, is certainly quite remote from the teaching of heathen religions: and it is full of the same spirit of hope and expectation which runs through the Bible from beginning to end. We pass, however, from this highly poetical book to that which comes to us sanctified by the practical use of many ages, and representing the faith, the love, the deep feeling, and the faithful worshipping life of the Church of God in every age since it was written—the book of Israel's praise.

*The Book of Psalms.*—The existence of such a book as this is itself a testimony to a twofold inspiration amongst the people of Israel. On the one hand, there was the inspiration which prompted the composition of the individual psalm; on the other hand, there was the inspiration diffused amongst the people to which the individual composition may be said to be addressed. A collection of hymns in the present day is founded upon the fact that the people of God meet together to sing His praises. The arrangement of such hymns and their pervading spirit and character correspond with the faith and pious experience of those who shall use

them in their worship. In just the same manner, the Book of Psalms reflects the faith and experience of the people of Israel. There must have been a *living* book of psalms before there could be a *written* one. The people who sang the songs must have been inspired as well as the men who composed them. Now, with respect to the date of the psalms, it is impossible to do more than reason with probability from the subject-matter or from the style of composition; therefore no weight must be laid upon chronological considerations. It is supposed that the Ninetieth Psalm was the composition of Moses, and others may have come down from his time. Many have been attributed to David, others to Solomon, some to Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets of the time of the kings, and others to the time of the Captivity, to Ezra and the period of the Restoration. It is only right, however, to admit that all such questions of date are completely unsettled, and that all we can say is, that the book was probably collected together during the time of the Captivity, when synagogue-worship would give special prominence to psalm-singing, and that some portion of it was much later in composition than others, from the references included in it. Whether we ascribe a large proportion or a small to King David and his age, it is certain that he laid great stress upon the performance of music in the temple-worship; and it is also certain that in the time of Samuel prophets were trained both in the composition and rendering of psalmody. Therefore some of the compositions which have come down to us are probably of older date than David; and as

poetry is ascribed to the times of the Patriarchs and the Exodus, it is making no unreasonable inference when we say that the Book of Psalms represents a continuous inspiration amongst the people of Israel from the time of Jacob to the Captivity. What, then, is the doctrine of the Spirit of God which characterises this collection of sacred songs? Take such an example as that which meets us on the first page, the First Psalm, which is of an introductory nature, some think composed by Ezra as a kind of preface to the whole collection as representing the doctrine of the book. *The man "who delights in the law of the Lord, and meditates in it day and night," is "like a tree planted by the rivers of water."* Evidently the conception which rules such language is that of the written law or word being made part of the inner man by the Spirit of God. The law becomes life. The same great truth of spiritual regeneration and growth runs through all the psalms. Again, as the outcries of the heart, as the records of experience, as the prayers and vows and thanksgivings and praises of God's people, the Psalms testify to a living fellowship between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man. Take such a simple song of adoration as the Eighth Psalm, which seems to come from David's shepherd life. What a testimony it is to the fact that the strength of God is ordained out of the mouth of babes and sucklings for the glory of His name in all the earth! *i.e.*, that the Spirit of God will speak to all mankind through the humblest and weakest of His people, because they are inspired. Man, visited of God, is above the very heavens. They declare

the glory of God, but Man under the influence of the Spirit of God is greater glory to His name. The work which is being done in the child of God is a perfect work. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Ps. xvii. 15). The Word of God is strength and redemption, because it is acceptable in our mouth and in the meditation of our heart; it is a Law which converts the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart, enlightens the eyes, warns and guides and preserves the man in his life (Ps. xix.). The individual child of God is in the midst of his brethren, of the congregation, and his personal faith and joy mingle with those of the universal Church (Ps. xxii.). The life of the whole flock of God is sung of by the Psalmist as he realises the blessedness of his own spiritual fellowship with Jehovah (Ps. xxiii.). He prays for Divine teaching and guidance, for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant" (Ps. xxv.). He beholds the beauty of Jehovah; he inquires in His temple; he dwells all his life in the Divine tabernacle (Ps. xxvii.). There is a voice of the Lord everywhere, but the people of God alone hear it as the voice of strength and blessing and peace (Ps. xxix.). The work of the Spirit is the work of cleansing and renewing, casting out sin and bringing in joy. It is the work of that Word which "made the heavens," which "spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast," breathing in the soul of man, and coming forth in songs of rejoicing (Ps. xxxii., xxxiii.). Far above all mere ritualistic observances and obedience is the blessed work of the Spirit: "Sacrifice

and offering Thou didst not desire ; mine ears hast Thou opened (that is, to the teachings of the Spirit), burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come : in the volume of the book it is written of me (*i.e.*, the truly spiritual and acceptable worshipper is thus described throughout the Scriptures). I delight to do Thy will, O my God : yea, Thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation : lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart ; I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation : I have not concealed Thy loving-kindness and Thy truth from the great congregation " (Ps. xl.). The Spirit received has been given forth as the free gift of God to the Church and the world. There are themes which fill the child of God with inspiration. " My heart bubbleth up with a good matter ; I speak of the things which I have made touching the King ; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer " (Ps. xlv.). " My mouth shall speak of wisdom : and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable (*i.e.*, as suggested to me by the Spirit of God) : I will open my dark saying upon the harp " (Ps. xlix.). The memorable confession of sin which David has recorded in the Fifty-first Psalm is full of spiritual teaching. It is the heart which is named as the seat of sin. It is the clean heart and the right spirit which is prayed for. " Cast me not away from Thy presence ; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation ; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit "

(Ps. li. 10-12). It is the same doctrine of Divine guidance and spiritual blessing which is taught by those psalms which review the past history of Israel, such as Ps. lxxviii., lxxix.; and in Ps. lxxx. spiritual revival is prayed for in terms which are freely employed under the Christian dispensation. "Turn us again, O God, and cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved. Look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine. Quicken us, and we will call upon Thy name. Cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved" (Ps. lxxx. 7, 14, 18, 19). From the Eightieth to the Eighty-fourth Psalm the people of God are the subject of the psalm, and through them His name is praised. We are led at last into the blessedness of God's House, and of those who dwell there, to whom He is a sun and shield, to whom He gives grace and glory. Occasionally the Psalmist returns to his individual sorrows and cares, but the majority of the songs of praise are fitted for the great assembly rejoicing together in the Covenant God, and in the glory of His Kingdom, "worshipping at His footstool, Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among them that called upon His name" (Ps. xcix.). The blessing which the individual soul ascribes to Jehovah is the blessing which all creation ascribes to Him (Ps. ciii., civ.). The song of the suffering and rejoicing believer is the song of the congregation, and it is varied with wonderful skill, through the memorials of the past and through the changes of personal history, until in the 119th Psalm we are arrested by a grand composition in which the work of



the Spirit in the laws and statutes and precepts and commandments and testimonies and judgments, and all the external revelations of the Divine Mind and Will, are blended with the gracious work of the same Spirit in the mind and heart and soul and daily experience of God's servant. The Spirit is the quickening, teaching, rebuking, comforting, strengthening, enlarging, upholding, preserving, delivering, and saving Spirit, for whose influence the Psalmist prays, and who is the life of his life. "The songs of degrees" are all of them songs of the people, cherishing their fellowship with one another because they cherish their fellowship with God. The great congregation offers its praises, the humble suppliant for Divine Grace cries out for help, but there is everywhere the same dependence on the "*Good Spirit*," who shall lead the believer into the land of uprightness (Ps. cxliii. 10). "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him, unto all that call upon Him in truth" (Ps. cxlv. 9, 18). The praises go up from every creature and through all varieties of instruments, blending in one vast hallelujah in which heaven and earth shall be united as in one universal and eternal sanctuary. Notwithstanding that there are, here and there, outbursts of national feeling with which we can scarcely be expected to sympathise, as they are expressed in the language of a warlike and semi-barbaric state which Christianity has almost banished from the world, is there a more spiritual book in the whole of Scripture than the Psalms? All through the ages since it was put together

it has been the food of the devout and the vehicle of believing prayer and praise to countless multitudes. "What," asks Mr. Isaac Taylor in his beautiful work on "The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry," "are modern hymns but so many laborious attempts to put in a new form that which, as it was done in the very best manner so many years ago, can never be well done again, otherwise than in the way of a verbal repetition?" (p. 158).

The three books which in our Bible are ascribed to Solomon, the Book of Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes, all represent a very distinct advancement in the religious thought of the people; the one being a very wide application of the teaching of the Law to the common life of men; the Song of Solomon being a highly figurative use of the relations and language of personal feeling to set forth the deepest and most experimental religious truth; and the book called "*The Preacher*" being either a book of confessions and retrospect in view of the Divine judgment and mercy, or a philosophical treatise of later date in which the teaching of the Word of God is set above the vain speculations of the world. All these works are based upon an element in the life of Israel which may be said to have originated with Solomon, the element "*Khokhma*," or wisdom, as a matter of teaching and spiritual elevation. The identification of wisdom and virtue, or godliness, and of folly and vice, is based upon the fact that the good man is the recipient of the Divine Spirit—he is taught of God. There may seem to be in the Proverbs and in Ecclesiastes a certain secularity and earthliness from which at first

we turn away, but it must be remembered that the Law of Moses was a law of human life in the present world, it was the law of a nation, while at the same time the Law of God. But there runs through the works of Solomon a profound reflection and a reference of earthly things to a heavenly origin and foundation which gives even to the maxims of prudence and sagacity a meaning much above the level of mere worldly calculation. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and the wisdom which God's people learn in the books of Solomon is a wisdom which cometh from above, and which leadeth upward through the lower sphere of morality and civil life to the higher region of fellowship with God and companionship with Him for ever. The magnificent personation of Wisdom in the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs has been regarded by many as an inspired anticipation of the revelations which were afterwards given through Him who was "in the beginning with God," and in whom He was "well pleased." What we are especially called to notice is, that in the age of Solomon, side by side with a very highly developed religious ritual and legal system, there was also an ethical teaching represented in these books. The *young* were invited to take the Law and Word of God as their guide through life. The *thinkers* were summoned to search for true wisdom in the revelation and commandments of God. The mysteries and problems of the world, insoluble as they are in the dim light of mere human wisdom and speculation, are set in the clear daylight of God's Law, and the Preacher declares that the way of obedience is the way of knowledge.

The people would be greatly helped by these thoughtful and almost philosophical works. The life was regulated by Moses, the heart was touched and moved by David, but there remained the intellect to be stimulated, and we cannot doubt that the very rapid progress of the nation during the Davidic period, followed by the peaceful reign of his son, would develop powers of thought such as would be fed and nourished by Solomon's wisdom. We cannot in this place enter upon the difficult critical controversy as to the authorship and date of Ecclesiastes. If it is intended to represent the repentance of the backsliding king in his last days, it becomes a very suitable completion of what we may call the Trilogy of Solomonic wisdom; the Song of Solomon representing the warmth and sincerity of the young man's religion; the Proverbs, his full-grown observation and experience in the application of the Word of God to human life; and the Ecclesiastes, the confessions and lamentations of the fallen king over his past sins, and the final result of his study of the world's problem, "*the conclusion of the whole matter.*" But it must be admitted that the last of the three books is not exactly what we should expect, in tone and manner, from such a man as Solomon in such a state of mind. Yet, difficult as it is to account for the form of the book, there is no departure in it from the standpoint of the other books. It is distinctly on the ground of the supremacy of the Divine Law and the misery of disobedience to it that all things are declared to be vanity; and the judgment which is proclaimed, and to which the young man and all others are pointed, the

future, when the spirit shall return to God, who gave it, and the scheme of this world shall be viewed in the light of eternity, are not speculations and dreams of philosophers or ideas borrowed from heathen systems, they are what the Preacher proclaims on the authority of Jehovah. "*Remember thy Creator ;*" that is the great rule. "*The words of the wise*"—i.e., those who are taught of God, those are the fixed and the honoured words—"as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one Shepherd." By them it is that the young man is admonished, and the sum and substance of what they say is, "*Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*" This certainly is a proclamation of the spirituality of the Law. It is not a mere civil law, it is not a mere ceremonial law, it is not a law which regulates the external obedience of the life alone, but it is a law of the secret things, of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Solomon, the sinful king, repeated the prayer which his sinful father had uttered before him, "*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*" If the book was composed in a much later age and ascribed to Solomon, or written, like some of the books of the Apocrypha, by one who personated him for the purpose of writing what would be understood as a kind of philosophical fiction, it is exceedingly difficult to know how it was admitted into the Old Testament canon. Even if we admit the theory to be sound, the fact remains that those who were well

acquainted with the other books of Solomon, and with the other writings of the Old Testament, did not regard this book as teaching anything which Solomon could not have taught ; therefore they became witnesses to its harmony, in matter at least, with the body of Scripture. The Solomonic books, therefore, taken as a whole, reveal a progressive spiritual life amongst the people. They passed from the idea of a written Law to the idea of inspired wisdom ; and the "*wise man*" of Solomon's writings is not the philosopher, not the intellectually great and distinguished, not the priest or the prophet or the king, regarded as exceptions, standing alone, but the good man, the man of God in whom His Spirit dwells, even the humblest and weakest, yea, the little child, who fears and loves Jehovah.

After the time of Solomon, the history of the chosen people is a sad record of unfaithfulness to Jehovah and to their mission as His witnesses. Their idolatry increased, and we cannot doubt that the fall of Solomon was to a large extent the source of the rapid popular corruption. The division of the nation into two kingdoms, while it was a judgment of Jehovah, was also the merciful means of the preservation for a time of the religious position given to the nation. The ten tribes went much further and more rapidly, in departure from God, than Judah. The opposition between the two kingdoms afforded the opportunity of protest against idolatry. The same general acknowledgment of the traditions on which both the northern kingdom and the southern rested kept up a certain religious uniformity.

Prophets were sent both to Israel and Judah, and sometimes the same prophet to both. But Jerusalem was the true centre of revelation and worship. Jeroboam's rebellion was not only against Rehoboam, but against Jehovah, although he chose to regard himself as fulfilling the Divine purposes (see I Kings xi. 31-35). The messengers who were sent to rebuke the idolatry of Israel were prophets; some of whom, as Elijah and Elisha, wrought great miracles. But after the period of miraculous signs had gone by, prophets were sent, who, while they wrought no external miracles before the people, ministered among them in the name of Jehovah, and left behind them written prophecies which were incorporated in the body of Scripture; and during the time of Israel's captivity in Assyria and Babylon, must have wonderfully contributed to maintain their faith and prepare them for future restoration especially as the Hope of the Messiah was a prominent subject in their messages. So far as the question of personal inspiration is concerned, the prophets who left behind them no writings, as Elijah and Elisha, were as truly filled with the Holy Ghost as any of those whose words we read. But beyond the fact that such inspired men invited by their ministry all their fellow-countrymen to hold fellowship with God and wait upon His word, we learn nothing from the history as to what they taught; yet they form a link of connection between the successive portions of revelation, between the Scriptures which are connected with the time of Solomon and those which, beginning, probably, with the Book of Jonah, continue to the end

of the canon. It seems not unlikely that the prophets of the earlier period for about a hundred years not only wrought miracles and delivered special Divine messages to kings, and were great reformers in the land, but also gathered the people together at times and preached to them in the name of Jehovah, so that they were regarded as organs of the Spirit, and were manifestly inspired men.

The date of some of the early prophetic books, as Jonah, Joel, Hosea, Amos, is very difficult to determine with precision. The critics have attacked the authenticity of Jonah with great severity. But as their attacks are really on the ground of the miracle contained in it, and the same objection would apply to the story of Elijah and Elisha, we cannot allow them to stand in our way in this review of the testimony of Scripture. (See the author's "Studies in the Book of Jonah," Lond. 1883). Taking the history of Jonah to be true, the book is a very striking introduction to the succession of prophetic writings which may be regarded as subsequent to it in time. Jonah's mission to Nineveh proclaimed the breadth of the Divine Word. His flight from the presence of the Lord, that is, from his work and mission as a prophet, with its rebuke and his repentance, reminds us how very solemn a thing it was then to be an inspired man and have the Word of the Lord to proclaim. And the story said loudly to the people, that if they would not fulfil Jehovah's mission to the world, it would still be fulfilled even against their will. As a people they must perish and rise again; and in their resurrection there would be at once a sign to the world and the



beginning of the Kingdom of Grace. Jonah's preaching must have been founded upon his history—he would know it and the Ninevites would know it. Though there is not much language that is inspired in the Book of Jonah, except the short song of praise for deliverance, which was probably borrowed from well-known psalms, the facts themselves are full of significance; and the whole forms a suitable link between the time of the prophets who did not write and those whose writings are preserved to us. The Spirit of God was poured out upon the people of Nineveh, which is a new fact. We have, in the ministry of Elisha, distinct indications of the connection of the heathen nations with Israel as a channel of grace to them. But the preaching of Jonah was a *mission* to the heathen world. So that we have in this one short book an epitome of prophecy. It is at the same time a significant parable setting forth the spiritual vocation of Israel, and an anticipation of the widespread work of the Spirit in the nations of the earth.

But after Jonah the clouds began to gather on the horizon, and the judgments of Jehovah threatened both kingdoms. In two hundred years the whole extent of the nation would be swept with the storm of the Divine wrath. The people of both kingdoms would, against their will, be made missionaries to the East. The Scriptures already written would be seen in the new light of providential dispensations; and in the gracious method of God, it was appointed that new Scriptures should be prepared, steeped in the reality of new facts. The epoch of written prophecy coincides, therefore, with that of approaching

judgment. It was of supreme importance at such a time that there should be in the hands of the true Church a body of Scriptures expounding the meaning of what occurred, and cherishing the faith and hope of God's people. Each prophet from the ninth century before Christ onwards utilised the writings of those who preceded him. And the whole were as a light shining in a dark place to a tried and tempted, and almost despairing, nation. So the Scripture written by the individual was read, copied, and handed on to the future with the seal of the true Church upon it. The Word of God given by the Spirit of God, beginning like a stream flowing from a source high up among the mountains of a sacred antiquity, gathered volume as it wound its way among the changing scenes and events of national history; it was the same, and yet not the same; it carried forward the current of Grace, always nearing the ocean of universal truth and the redemption of "all the families of the earth."

*Joel* is among the first, if not actually the first, of the prophets whose words have come down to us,—between the dates 837 and 757 B.C. He was sent at an important period to preach a spiritual restoration to Judah. Terrible visitations were sent about that time—a plague of locusts and an earthquake (see Amos i. 1). The natural event is taken as a text—Joel preaches repentance and promises the outpouring of the Spirit of God. The main feature of the book is the lifting up of the prophetic voice to the higher tones of a spiritual kingdom. The whole nation is invited to rejoice in Divine inspira-

tion. A kingdom of prophets and priests shall be hereafter a kingdom of princes and mighty rulers of the earth. There is no such proclamation of the free gifts of the Spirit in any preceding writer, though the doctrine of free grace was implied. Repentance is invited distinctly on the ground of Divine promises of restoration and renewal. Repentance itself is God's gift; that which we present to God first comes from God. We give Him of His own. If the temple-worship is to be acceptable and is to be as it has been in beauty and glory, it must be by God's own presence being manifested. He will inspire us that we may be pleasing in His sight. The spiritual kingdom is the basis on which the material kingdom rests. That is the fundamental truth of the Theocracy. It is the main teaching of Joel, and of all the prophets who followed him.

Another truth which is before the prophet is the fellowship of God's people, their universal priesthood and common sanctity. The congregation is before the Lord in all its manifold variety. They were blessed together. And it was in close connection with this community of the national life and universality of religious privilege that we read the Divine promises of outpoured grace. Joel gives us in a few words the outline which subsequent writers fill in. Chapter ii. vers. 28-32 describes a great outpouring of the Spirit, and by means of it a separation of a remnant according to the election of grace. "*And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams,*

*your young men shall see visions ; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit*" (vers. 28, 29). This promise of the Spirit is immediately connected with a promise of deliverance for all who shall call on the name of Jehovah. This promise is generally regarded as Messianic ; but whether we take it as looking forward to the times of Messiah or referring to nearer events, it is assuredly a very remarkable advance in the clear proclamation of spiritual blessings. It must have sustained the faith of God's people. If He would pour out upon all flesh of His Spirit, then no sincere servant of the Lord could doubt that if he sought for spiritual gifts they would be bestowed, and whosoever would might be in the remnant according to the election of grace. The quotation of this passage by the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost has given it a special importance in the words of prophecy. It pointed, no doubt, as St. Peter says, to that gracious time when all the families of the earth should be blessed by being taken into the covenant of Abraham ; it anticipated a great dispensation of the Spirit, in which we now live through the preaching of the Gospel ; but we should misinterpret, surely, this apostolic application of the prophet's language if we take it to mean that there was no pouring out of the Divine Spirit before the Day of Pentecost. The prediction is that of an ever-widening bestowal of grace, whereby the kingdom of Heaven shall be set up upon earth, which shall call all the nations into the great valley of decision and bring about the glory of Zion. God's method is to work for the salvation of the

world both by His Spirit within and by His Providence without, and the doctrine of the Theocracy necessitates a continual work of His grace in the souls of men, whereby human nature itself is renewed. Thus Joel sets before us in the latter part of his prophecy the great doctrine which is expounded very fully by those who followed him, the spiritual life the root of all life; the work of God in the inner man the real salvation. This was the doctrine which Jesus proclaimed—"The kingdom of God is within you." This was the truth which was written over the porch of Christianity on the Day of Pentecost.

About the same time that the prophet Joel spoke so distinctly of the outpouring of the Spirit, the two prophets *Amos* and *Hosea* appeared; Amos about 810 B.C., and Hosea about 800 B.C. Amos, in his own person, was a very striking proclamation of the freedom of the Spirit, for he was from "among the herdmen of Tekoa;" he was called out by special spiritual inspiration from the class of agricultural labourers. The prominent topic in Joel's predictions was the great Day of the Lord. That is the theme of the prophets who immediately followed him or were contemporaneous with him. The idea of a union of judgment with mercy runs through all the Scriptures. The Day of the Lord is terrible to the enemies of Israel, but the revelation of glory to the people of God. The restoration which is promised is a spiritual restoration. The feast-days and solemn assemblies are nothing in the sight of God; "*but let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*" The Word of the Lord is the precious thing, and the time

shall come when it shall be sought by those "who run to and fro, and wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east." There shall be a glorious revival and renewal of Israel. They shall be "planted upon their land, and they shall be no more pulled up." Hosea is full of the future glory of Israel. The Jezreel (lit., "he will sow") whose day is foreseen is the great spiritual King who should fulfil the promise of the Theocracy. Israel would become a new kingdom by being sown afresh with righteous seed. "In the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God" (Hos. i. 10; cf. ii. 15-23, iii. 5). The whole book is full of the idea of spiritual restoration, and concludes with one of the most beautiful promises of Divine healing grace to be found in the whole of the Old Testament (Hos. xiv.), a promise which is commended to those who in dependence on the Spirit of God seek to know His will. "*Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them?*" We cannot pass from Hosea without noticing his use of the figure of resurrection, probably from the history of Jonah, his miraculous recovery being regarded in the light of a resurrection, if not actually so; the spiritual restoration of Israel is spoken of as a quickening of the dead by Divine power, and subsequent prophets freely employ the same figure, especially Isaiah and Ezekiel. It is extremely important to notice this early use of the analogy of physical life to set forth spiritual life. The Spirit of God is thus represented as a creative Spirit. He gives life when

there is death. Ezekiel leaves us in no doubt that that was the belief of the people, for the work is ascribed to the Spirit of God directly (Ezek. xxxvii. 14).

About the middle of the eighth century before Christ appeared the two prophets Micah and Isaiah. It is difficult to say how far they worked together and quoted one another, but they were certainly filled with the same spirit,—and that a very exalted one. The very opening words of Micah speak of the breadth of view which was given to the prophets, and how comprehensive their messages were. “Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord God be witness against you, the Lord from His holy temple. For, behold, the Lord God cometh forth out of His place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be molten under Him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place” (Mic. i. 2–4). The Spirit of God is proclaimed to be a Spirit of grace. “O thou that art named The house of Jacob, is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?” But the true Spirit is distinguished from the false. There is no answer of God to those who, while they profess to have the Spirit of God, walk in lies and unrighteousness. “But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.” There will come a time when all the world shall acknowledge the power of Jehovah; all shall see the mountain of the House of the Lord established on the top of the moun-

tains and exalted above the hills, and the people flowing unto it. "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." This prediction of the universal spread of Divine teaching and its effects on the world is a prediction of the diffusion of spiritual grace in harmony with the earlier prophecy of Joel. The judgments which are foretold are judgments which prepare the way for mercy, and the message of God to His people shows them what is good, which is the simple life of faith and obedience, "*to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God*" (Mic. vi. 8). The concluding words of the prophet Micah are like a gleam of Gospel light on the horizon, almost an anticipation of the Day of Pentecost: "*Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.*" This truly is the voice of the Spirit.

Coming to the great evangelical prophet Isaiah, or to the group of writings which bear his name, we recognise at once the high spiritual tone which pervades all the language. Dean Payne Smith, in his admirable work,



“Prophecy a Preparation for Christ,” has very justly observed : “Without Isaiah I doubt whether the Jews could have preserved their faith during their long centuries of dispersion ; without Isaiah I doubt whether the Christian Church could have been so quickly, so surely founded.” The book is full of Christ ; it is full of the Spirit of Christ. The very first chapter is a solemn protest against formality and hypocrisy ; the second is a repetition of the great proclamation of a universal Kingdom of Grace from the prophet Micah ; and the House of Jacob is invited to walk in the light of the Lord, turning away from all false spirits to the true Spirit of God. The people of God are a vineyard, and the Lord is the Husbandman. It is the Law and the Word which they have despised, and which must be their restoration by its spiritual power. The grand vision of the sixth chapter is a vision of spiritual glory. The mission of the prophet is by spiritual cleansing, taking away iniquity and purging sin ; and the revival of Israel through the tenth, the remnant according to the election of grace, is a spiritual revival. The Lord is before His people, that they may wait upon Him. “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter : should not a people seek unto their God ? should they seek to the dead for the living ? To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them ” (or, morning of joy for them) (chap. viii. 19, 20). That Isaiah is full of the promise of the Messiah there is no need to show ;

but it is important to remember that the Divine Messenger and Deliverer promised is clearly described as one who is full of the Spirit of God, and giving of that Spirit to others. Chapters xi. and xii. set forth the Branch growing out of the roots of Jesse; that is, the great Davidian King, who shall not only Himself be full of wisdom and understanding, but shall deliver the people, and put into their lips the lovely song of praise in chapter xii., which concludes with the pæan of victory over sin and the world: "*Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee*" (chap. xii. 6). Chapter after chapter the judgments of Jehovah are predicted, but His mercy is seen through them all. The fallen and rebellious Israel is invited to become the restored and saved Israel through the quickening and renewing Grace of God. "Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (chap. xxix. 17-19). The work of revival and restoration is distinctly ascribed to the Spirit of God in chap. xxxii. 15-18. There is desolation and misery: "Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteous-

ness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." The beautiful description of redemption in chapter xxxv. cannot be understood of mere external change and restoration of the people to their land; it is the promise of a gracious work of the Spirit, which shall separate the clean from the unclean, shall put songs into the lips of the redeemed, and joy on their heads, and drive away all sorrow and sighing from them for ever. The second part of the Book of Isaiah, from chapter xl. to the end, is a still higher strain of prophecy, and comes closer, perhaps, than any other portion of the Old Testament to the language of the New Dispensation. The Spirit of the Lord is again and again directly named. The people of God are His witnesses because they are inspired. The servant of Jehovah is encouraged by the greatest promises because the Lord is with him and holds him by the right hand, and gives to him abundantly. The poor and needy, the hungry and thirsty, are lifted up by Divine Grace. "I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath

created it" (chap. xli. 17-20). There is One who is pre-eminently the Servant of the Lord, His elect in whom His soul delighteth. "I have put My Spirit upon him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law." The whole of the wonderful description in chapters xlii., xliii., and xliv. of the work of God's servant is full of an almost Christian doctrine of the Spirit. The promise is distinctly given: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel" (chap. xliv. 3-5). The suffering Servant of the Lord, described in chapter liii., is the King of Grace, in whose "*hand the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper,*" who shall "*see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.*" His victories are spiritual victories. His subjects are members of a spiritual kingdom. The people are invited to come to the waters of this fountain of spiritual life; and the blessed influence which is promised is that which makes the thorn and the briar both of the individual life and of the whole race of man to disappear, and instead

of them the fir tree and the myrtle, beautiful, fragrant, fruitful life to abound over the earth. God is the Healer, restoring comfort, creating the fruit of the lips. "Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near." "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun: when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (chap. lix. 19). The glory of the redeemed people is depicted in language which has little meaning except it be interpreted spiritually. "The people shall be all righteous." The proclamation which is made to the world in the name of the Lord and through His people is one that the Spirit of God inspires. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord God hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek: He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified" (chap. lxi. 1-3). The fact that the Lord Jesus applied this language to Himself, and declared it fulfilled in His spiritual ministry, leaves us in no doubt that the doctrine of the Spirit was clearly before the mind of the prophet, and was therefore familiar to those to whom He addressed Himself more than seven hundred

years before Christ. The analogy of spiritual restoration with natural growth is based upon the doctrine of inward life bestowed by the work of grace. "*The Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations,*" that is, by the power of the Holy Ghost working in the hearts of men.

The references to the work of the Spirit are numerous in the later chapters of Isaiah. The people are said to have "rebelled and vexed the Holy Spirit of the Lord" (chap. lxiii. 10). Moses, the shepherd of the flock, was made so by direct inspiration. "Then He remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? where is He that put His Holy Spirit within him?" "As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest" (chap. lxiii. 11, 14). "For, behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy" (chap. lxv. 17, 18). The new creation is a spiritual renewal of God's people. "For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord" (chap. lxvi. 22, 23). The worship which was rejected because it was polluted and insincere has been purified by Divine Grace, and the offering which the

children of Israel bring is henceforth an acceptable offering, brought "in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord." It has been remarked by the critics that the later chapters of Isaiah (xl.—lxvi.) were written especially for the sake of those who would be carried into captivity, and who would need more spiritual consolations, because the ritual services of the temple were interrupted. The ideal which is presented to us in these later chapters is certainly a very lofty one, and is coming forth in due time from God Himself. Isaiah was full of the Holy Ghost himself, and he uttered words which helped the people to depend on the gracious work of God in their souls when they were cast out from the external privileges which they had forfeited by their unfaithfulness.

Contemporary with Isaiah lived the prophet Nahum (about 720 B.C.); but as his prophecy is chiefly concerning Nineveh and the destruction of the Assyrian power, there is no need to seek in it any teaching on the doctrine of the Spirit, although the general tone of the prophet is that of believing confidence in Him who is "a strong hold in the day of trouble, and knoweth them that trust in Him" (chap. i. 7). The strength of the Lord's people is in their spiritual restoration. "Behold upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off" (chap. i. 15). After the time of Isaiah and Nahum there was an interval during which prophecy was silent. But shortly before the great climax of the national history, when the judgments of

Jehovah were poured out, the line of inspired preachers recommenced. From Zephaniah down to Malachi, through the time of disaster and ruin to the time of restoration and a hundred years afterwards, with more or less of continuity, there was a stream of Divine messages sent to the people; and it is easy to recognise in all these latest prophets a fuller and more emphatic appeal to those who were suffering for their sins to call upon Jehovah for the gifts of His grace and for the new creation, by which alone they could be restored to a new and better state, both as individuals and as a nation. The three most prominent of these prophets of revival, as we may call them, are Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, and their testimony to the Spirit is very distinct and very abundant. But in addition to these longer writings, and characterised by the same pervading faith, largely influenced by the works of preceding prophets such as Isaiah, there are other messages preserved to us, sent by such men as Zephaniah, Daniel, Obadiah, Haggai, Habakkuk, and Malachi; and there are historical books connected with the same period, such as Ezra and Nehemiah, which open to us the inner life of the people through their inspired leaders.

The short book of three chapters which bears the name of Zephaniah is said to have been published "*in the days of Josiah, king of Judah,*" i.e., from 640 to 609 B.C. That was a time when external reformation was carried on with great vigour by the royal power, but nothing could avert the Divine judgments which were coming both upon Judah and upon the neighbouring nations.



The Day of the Lord is proclaimed by the prophet as with the voice of a trumpet; but the spécial subject of his prophecy seems to be the hope of Judah in spiritual revival and restoration: "Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." The people are promised a cleansing both of the heart and the lips, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, and serve Him with one consent (chap. iii. 9). "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My suppliants, even the daughter of My dispersed, shall bring Mine offering." The people shall be purged with judgments, but in the midst of them shall be left "an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid." The last words of the book (chap. iii. 14-20) are an invitation to rejoicing in anticipation of a complete restoration, which is represented as a spiritual work over which the Lord shall rejoice, "resting in His love, and joying over His people with singing."

The date of Jeremiah (628 to 585 B.C.) reminds us that the central point of his prophecy is the captivity of Judah in 606 B.C. Full as his words are of the spirit of lamentation and confession in the presence of Jehovah's righteous judgments, they are yet calls to repentance and reformation in dependence on the Spirit of God. The opening words remind us that

one who feels himself as a little child may yet be God's spokesman, his mouth being touched by the hand of the Lord, and then his mission is the highest "over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." The prophet's rebukes are very severe, but his appeals are full of the tenderest compassion, and breathe the very spirit of faith in the Divine covenant. The whole future of Israel hangs upon their repentance and return to their God. It was in a spiritual circumcision that they would be made once more the people of Jehovah. "*O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?*" (chap. iv. 14). "*A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and My people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?*" (chap. v. 30, 31). The House of God is become "a den of robbers" (chap. vii. 1-12). Such hypocrisy and formalism God will not accept, and the holy places and things shall be defiled and destroyed. But restoration is His, and He will give it. "Go and proclaim the ancient covenant," said God to Jeremiah. If they return to the covenant, and seek Him who made it with their fathers, they shall yet be saved. So far as the nation as a nation is concerned, their transgressions are gone too far to be overlooked; they are like the linen girdle buried by Euphrates, "*marred and profitable for nothing;*" but the Lord, who has put off the girdle from Himself, can put on another and a better, and He will create His

people afresh by His Spirit. "The fishers shall come and fish the true Israel out of many places, and the hunters shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks" (chap. xvi. 16, 17). It is the deceitful and disobedient heart that must be cleansed and changed. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for Thou art my praise" (chap. xvii. 5-14). The scene in the potter's house is the great message to the people: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel" (chap. xviii. 1-6). Jeremiah proclaims the promise of the great Deliverer, "*The Branch, the Lord our Righteousness;*" but he connects with it very clearly the promise of a better order of prophets who shall not speak out of their own hearts, but as the Lord inspires them (see chapter xxiii.). The story of the true prophet himself is a confirmation of his teaching, and stands in the midst of it as a practical illustration of the truth of God. The spiritual restoration is promised, and shall bring with it a restored nationality (see chapters xxx., xxxi.). The promise of the Spirit is very emphatic and distinct, and reminds us of that which was given by the prophet Joel more than two hundred years before: "*But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord:*

*For they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more*" (chap. xxxi. 33, 34). The thirty-third chapter, which is the word that came to the prophet when he was shut up in the court of the prison, is one long and most glowing prediction of spiritual restoration, the very heart of which is the promise of the great Spiritual Redeemer, the Branch of Righteousness, whose righteousness shall restore the people, and the covenant established in Him shall never pass away.

The Book of Lamentations is founded upon the same truth. It is a confession before God in the hope of forgiveness and renewal. The prayer which runs through it all is the prayer with which it concludes, "*Turn Thou us unto Thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.*" After the discovery of the Law in the days of king Josiah, the people were exhorted to repentance with new earnestness in view of the new revelation thus sent to them. The Law must not only be read and remembered, but observed and kept, and especially in its highest spiritual meaning. It has been thought by some that the prediction in chapter iii. 16, 17, that the Ark of the Covenant shall be forgotten, and Jerusalem shall be called the Throne of the Lord, in the midst of gathered nations, was intended to set forth the freedom and graciousness of the New Dispensation, when the Spirit should be poured out upon all flesh, and ritual observances shall be no longer esteemed of great importance. Certainly such

words were never employed by any preceding prophet, and Jeremiah is full of the spirit of the new covenant, which is the covenant of universal Grace.

Postponing for the present the consideration of the Book of Daniel, as its authenticity is so much in dispute, and it stands so much by itself as an apocalyptic book, the *Book of Ezekiel*, which represents the time of the Captivity, comes next to be examined. The testimony we find in Ezekiel to the doctrine of the Spirit is one of the fullest and most explicit in the Old Testament. His preaching was intended to work a special work among the exiles, drawing them and keeping them together, and giving them help to resist the influence of heathenism. There is, as in Jeremiah, a very evident intention in the prophet's words to convince the people, and especially the higher classes and professedly religious among them, of their corruption and spiritual danger. But there is also, equally conspicuous, a strong confidence in the sufficiency of Divine Grace and in the future restoration of the true Israel. "It was his to teach the progress of the kingdom of God from the first call of Abraham to the establishment of the kingdom of David, and to show that this most triumphant period of his people's history was but a shadow of still greater glory. He was to raise the drooping spirits of his countrymen by the prospect of a restoration, reaching far beyond a return to their native soil; he was to point to an inauguration of Divine worship far more solemn than was to be secured by the reconstruction of the city or temple on its original site in its original form; to point, in fact, to that dispensation

which temple, city, and nation were intended to foreshadow and introduce" ("Speaker's Com.," vol. vi. 4). Ezekiel was probably himself a priest and the son of a priest, and the two offices of priest and prophet being united in him gave peculiar force to his message. "The heavens were opened to him" by the river of Chebar, and he "saw visions of God." The wonderful vision of the Divine glory with which the book opens prepares us for the highly spiritual character of what follows. The message is directly from God, and is sent to the people, who are described as "impudent children, and stiff-hearted and rebellious." The roll written within and without with lamentations and mourning and woe has to be eaten by the prophet, sweetness in the mouth, but bitterness as it is digested and understood. The Spirit of God is the revealer of the secret things, taking up the prophet and carrying him from place to place and teaching him what to do and what to say. The prophet is not merely gifted for a time with a power of vision, but he is a pastor responsible for the people, whose blood shall be required at his hand. The Spirit entered into him, and set him on his feet and talked with him. Vision after vision is given to the prophet, by which the awful wickedness of the House of Israel is set forth and the tremendous judgments are denounced, until Ezekiel in his terror cries out, "Ah Lord God! wilt Thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?" Then, in answer to that prayer for comfort, the Lord gives a promise of restoring grace. All the detestable and abominable things shall be taken away. "*And I will give them one heart, and I will put*

*a new Spirit within you ; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh ; that they may walk in My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances, and do them : and they shall be My people, and I will be their God”* (chap. xi. 18–20). As we have seen in the case of Jeremiah, the false prophets and corrupt priests and unbelieving shepherds are condemned by Ezekiel, and the true Word of God is put in contrast with that by which the people are maintained in their evil ways. The call to repentance is very loud and very urgent. The sins which are slaying them are sins of the heart, and only by putting them out of their hearts can they be saved. Again and again it is “a new heart and a new Spirit” which the people are told to seek. When the corrupt elders came to inquire of Jehovah, the prophet was commanded to reject them. They would only be accepted when they truly repented. “For in Mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the House of Israel, all of them in the land, serve Me : there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered ; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up Mine hand to give it to your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye

have been defiled ; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have wrought with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye House of Israel, saith the Lord God" (chap. xx. 40-44). It is not a mere national restoration which is here in view, but the true Israel is foreseen developed out of the living remnant in the old and corrupt nation. The solemn address to the shepherds in chapter xxxiv., with the prediction of the One Great and True Shepherd who should feed His flock, and gather them together and separate the evil from the good, cannot, of course, be applied to any state of things which preceded the coming of Christ. It is a very lofty spiritual appeal to the teachers and guides of the people to do justice to their high vocation and feed the flock of God with His Word. The language of the prophet is highly figurative, but it is easily interpreted in the light of the Gospel, of which it was an anticipation. Take, for example, such a promise as we read in chapter xxxvi. 24-38. The clear water which shall be sprinkled upon the people is surely the Spirit, for it is promised, "*I will put My Spirit within you.*" The whole passage is evangelical in its whole thought and even expression, and the gifts which are promised are held out as the objects of believing prayer. "*I will yet be inquired of by the House of Israel, to do it for them*" (chap. xxxvi. 38). And immediately upon these beautiful spiritual promises we find the wonderful vision of the Resurrection in the Valley of Dry Bones (chap.



xxxvii.). The last twelve chapters of Ezekiel may be regarded as one connected vision predicting the restoration of Israel. First we have the Divine breath breathing into the dry bones, the ruined and decaying people, the new life. Then the heathen multitudes of Gog and Magog are described as assaulting the redeemed people and destroyed by the judgments poured out upon them. And after the destruction of the enemies the new Israel is seen with the new Temple filled with the Glory of Jehovah, with a new priesthood and new services, and holy waters flowing forth from the Throne of God to heal all that they touch and purify the land. The whole is an apocalyptic vision of a final and glorious state which has evidently been before the mind of the apostolic seer in the concluding chapters of the Book of Revelation. The vision of the Valley of Dry Bones cannot be understood in any other sense than a symbolical one, and must point to the work of the Spirit of God. "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." The interpretation is given as well as the vision. Resurrection was not an unknown idea to the Jews of that time. The miracles of Elijah and Elisha, the deliverance of Jonah the prophet, and many other facts which were familiar to their minds, such as the translations of Enoch and Elijah and the burial of Moses by the angels, with the pervading belief in miraculous power, would prepare them to receive such a message. Even if we grant that they would understand the resurrection as a figure setting forth their national revival, still it must be admitted that the revival of the national life

is represented as the work of the Spirit of God. Throughout the messages of Ezekiel to the people they are taught that their salvation must be spiritual, their sins must be forgiven, and their moral state renewed before they can be brought back to their former prosperity. "Prophecy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put My Spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord" (chap. xxxvii. 13, 14). Whatever is promised to Israel is promised distinctly on the foundation of spiritual renewal and sanctification. They are not brought back to their land to pollute it again, but to be a holy people to the Lord. The same figure of a resurrection of the dead to life is found in earlier prophets, in Hosea and in Isaiah. And the grandeur of the work was itself the consolation which Ezekiel offered to those who were ready to despair in their captivity. They could be raised to life even though their present state was so helpless and miserable that it could only be compared to a Valley of Dry Bones. As to the vision of the Temple and the waters flowing from it, while no doubt it was intended to encourage the leaders of the Jews in their future work in restoring the fallen institutions of their land and re-establishing their religion, it is impossible to regard it as limited to such a

purpose. The whole is plainly symbolical. The measurements prove it, as they correspond neither with the measurements of the Temple which was erected, nor even with those of the Holy Land itself. We must remember that Ezekiel's aim was to lift up the thoughts and feelings of the people, to spiritualise them, and that his predictions were followed by those of Zechariah and Malachi, which plainly pointed to a higher sphere of life than any at that time reached. The Hope of the Messiah runs as a golden thread through all such prophecies, and connects them with a far more glorious future than could be realised in the narrow limits of Palestine. It has been well remarked by Dr. Titcomb in his work on "Revelation in Progress from Adam to Malachi" (p. 393), "The fact that this description was symbolical, while, for present purposes, it would stimulate the people's zeal to return home and literally rebuild their sanctuary, would no less intimate to the more reflecting portion of them the probability of its literal features giving way at some future time, and melting off into the broader and more spiritual characteristics of Messianic Church government. While Jerusalem was still represented as being the Throne of the Lord, and the restored Church of Israel as the great centre of attraction for all nations, there were evidently striking proofs in existence that some of the Mosaic institutions would ultimately be broken up. Hence this vision of Ezekiel could not have presented anything more to a well-instructed Jew than a picture, under symbols drawn for their present dispensation, of their final inheritance of Canaan in the days of Messiah. The

more uninstructed and the less spiritual they were, however, the more they would be naturally disposed to cling to the letter rather than to the spirit; a fact which was lamentably proved at last by their rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ as their Messiah." The words themselves rebuked their unbelief, for the promise was that the Lord would not any more "*hide His face from them: for I have poured out My Spirit upon the House of Israel, saith the Lord God*" (chap. xxxix. 29). The very last words of the prophet were as a text on which succeeding messengers could preach, appealing to the people to put away their worldliness and live a spiritual life: "*And the name of the city from that day shall be Jehovah-Shammah: the Lord is there.*" The indwelling Jehovah the life of His people. Surely such a promise was itself a proclamation of the Grace of God.

Next to the Book of Ezekiel in our English Bible stands the Book of Daniel. It is a testimony to the fact of Inspiration from beginning to end. Whenever it was written, it is certain that the Jews received it as not out of harmony with the rest of their Scriptures, and therefore they must have believed that such gifts could have been manifested by Hebrew captives in Babylon and Chaldea, and that such effects could have been produced upon heathen nations. Daniel's own visions correspond with visions of other prophets, both in matter and in form, and Daniel is a type of the inspired man taken into fellowship with God. The glory of the Divine Kingdom set forth in the visions given to the prophet is a spiritual glory. The heirs of the Kingdom "*shall be*

*purified and made white, but the wicked shall do wickedly."*

The blessed are those who turn many to righteousness, and the glory in which they shall shine is the glory of everlasting life—the glory of the Holy God, for which they are prepared by His Spirit.

There are other writings previous to the Restoration from Babylon, such as Nahum and Obadiah and Habakkuk, which here and there indicate the belief of the people in the work of the Spirit, but their testimony is very brief and indistinct, and their date is uncertain. It will not, therefore, be necessary to include them in this review of the Old Testament. We therefore pass on to the great national crisis when Deliverance was at hand and the people looked forward to the fulfilment of Divine promises in the re-establishment of their national existence. The writings which come under notice at this point are the two prophetic books Haggai and Zechariah and the two historical books Ezra and Nehemiah. The Book of Ezra goes back to the year 536 B.C. and the time of Zerubbabel, but it was not composed till much later. Therefore the first book which comes before us identified with the period of the Return of the Jews from Babylon is the Book of Haggai. It is thought that Haggai actually returned with the exiles after the edict of Cyrus. He was not called to the office of prophet until 520 B.C., which is called the second year of Darius, son of Hystaspes. The words of the prophet are directed to Zerubbabel, and through him to the people to stir them up to build the Lord's House. The work which the prophet is called to do is described as the work of the

Spirit of God: "Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the Lord. And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of the remnant of the people" (chap. i. 13, 14). Their strength is Divine strength: "According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not" (chap. ii. 5.) The glory which is predicted, which shall fill the House of the Lord, is not a mere external glory; it is a spiritual glory, such as Ezekiel had described symbolically. All nations shall be shaken, and the Desire of all nations shall come. Their ruler shall be a signet on the Lord's hand. He is the chosen of the Lord of Hosts. The promises of God shall yet be fulfilled in One who is the true King and the true Priest.

Contemporary with Haggai was Zechariah, and his prophecies date from about 500 B.C. There has been, and still is, a great deal of controversy about the authenticity of the book which appears under his name. The present Book of Zechariah is supposed by many to be two books put together—the last six chapters being referred to an earlier writer. Allusions occur in the latter half to Jeremiah and Ezekiel. This would seem to show that the writer lived after their time, and therefore probably after the exile. It is only in modern times that the theory of a double authorship has been started. The subject is too difficult to be entered upon here, and

has no importance in connection with the review of the Scripture testimony which we are making. The doctrine of the Spirit which we find in Zechariah is a very developed doctrine ; and we can well understand its coming forth from the groups of devout and spiritually-minded men represented by Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, and Zechariah. The very first message which the prophet brought to the people was a call to repentance and real change of heart : “ *Turn ye unto Me, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts.*” The name by which God speaks all through the book is itself an appeal to faith in the spirituality of God. He is “Jehovah of Hosts,” *i.e.*, surrounded by the myriads of spiritual beings who are His servants. The angelic appearances which are recorded are connected with “good words and comfortable words” sent to the people. The angel communes with the prophet. He is the voice of peace and comfort to the Daughter of Zion. The city shall be cleansed, the high priesthood shall be cleansed. The fair mitre shall be put on the head of the nation through its High Priest. The Branch is coming forth ; the Stone which has seven eyes ; and the iniquity of the land shall be removed as in one day. All such changes are manifestly spiritual changes, and the fourth chapter is the most decided and developed testimony to the person and work of the Holy Spirit which is found in all the Old Testament. The candlestick of gold plainly represents the people of God as the Light of the world. The seven pipes from the two olive-trees, one on each side of the foot of the candlestick, supplying the golden

oil, are emblems of the Holy Spirit. This is not left to conjecture. It is plainly stated: "*Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.*" The two olive-trees are declared to be "*the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*" That is to say, the king and priest, or civil and religious leaders, whoever they may be at any time, are true leaders and true lights and true builders up of the Kingdom of God only as they are really anointed of God's Spirit. Nothing could more plainly say that the Unction of the Holy One is the power and the glory of God's people. The visions which follow no doubt refer to great providential appointments, but they remind us that "*Spirits of the Heavens go forth amongst many from standing before the Lord of all the earth.*" They quiet the spirit in the north country, *i.e.*, the angels of God work changes in the kingdoms of the world, sometimes for disturbance and revolution and overthrow of the false and wicked, and sometimes for peace and the establishment of the good. The crowns placed on the head of Joshua are crowns predictive of peace and glory in the future, when the Branch shall come and build the true Temple of Jehovah. It shall come to pass if they diligently obey the voice of the Lord their God. Then follow a number of messages to the people which are in the nature of exhortations to faithfulness and spiritual preparation for the work of God. The last six chapters are somewhat different in character



from the first, but their testimony to the Spirit is equally clear. He who speaks is He who "*stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth, and formed the spirit of Man within him.*" In the day of Divine judgments upon Jerusalem and upon surrounding nations it is promised: "And I will pour upon the House of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born." The land and the families are described full of the spirit of mourning and confession and prayer (chap. xii. 10-14). And immediately follows the prediction of the open fountain for sin and for uncleanness. The false prophets shall be cast out of the land. The great Refiner is at work, and He will bring the people through the fire until they are spiritually cleansed and pure: "*I will say, It is My people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.*"

In connection with the wonderful prediction in chapter xiv. of the appearance of the Lord with His saints, when the evening shall change into light, there is an evident repetition of Ezekiel's vision of the waters which represent the work of the Spirit. "*And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former (or eastern) sea, and half of them toward the hinder (or western) sea; in summer and in winter shall it be; and (as the result of this outpouring of the Spirit) the Lord shall be King over all*

*the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.*" The concluding words of the prophecy evidently refer to that same perfect worship of God which is set forth by Ezekiel under the figure of the restored Temple and its services. The Feast of Tabernacles is to be held at Jerusalem, and all that are left of the nations are to come and take part in it. "Holiness to the Lord" shall be on the bridles of the horses, and the very commonest vessels in the Lord's House shall be so sanctified and transformed by the renewing efficacy of the Spirit, that they shall be like the golden bowl before the altar. Yea, every vessel throughout all the habitations of the people shall be sanctified in this way. "*And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the House of the Lord of Hosts.*" This last word of the prophet points to a vast spiritual work by which both the religious life and the common life of the people shall be lifted up into purity and glory. Such a prediction, though it was partially fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, yet remains to be the ideal before the Church of God age after age. It has never yet been realised in all its extent, even under the Christian Dispensation. And the prophet who could foresee such a future was certainly himself full of the Spirit of God. It is very significant that such messages should accompany the restoration of Israel from captivity. Truly they were a missionary people, and had they fulfilled their vocation as such, they would have anticipated the Gospel itself. But they fell, that in their fall many might rise.

The two historical books of Ezra and Nehemiah are

characterised by a very devout spirit, and testify to the faith of the leading men of the Jews when God delivered them out of captivity. The wonderful events which are narrated are ascribed distinctly to the work of the Divine Spirit upon the minds of heathen rulers. "*The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia.*" "*Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the House of the Lord which is in Jerusalem*" (Ezra i. 1, 5). The power of the heathen is turned to help the children of God. We are led to the conclusion that the impression made upon Cyrus was due to the work of Grace among the Jews. The story which Ezra tells of the trials of the returning exiles is connected with confessions of their unfaithfulness, and their settlement in their own land is made the opportunity for a reconstitution of their religious life and a renewal of their covenant with Jehovah. Ezra was a man of prayer, and was evidently himself full of the Holy Ghost. We cannot doubt that, as he laboured in conjunction with inspired men, such as Haggai and Zechariah, the people were instructed to look beyond the mere outside prosperity with which they were favoured. And the Hand of God worked with Ezra and the prophets, for there was much trial mingled with their deliverance. They were not permitted to think that it was for their own sakes that they were being brought back to Palestine. It is believed by the Jews that Ezra and his contemporaries put together the Scriptures which had been written up to their time, and were especially

guided by the Spirit of God in their work. It is impossible to prove this, but he was certainly a scribe, and it is not unlikely that, as the people were resettled nationally, their Scriptures would be collected and re-edited at that time. He was a very earnest and devout man. There is no evidence that in any respect he failed in his duty in a very responsible position. "In his indefatigable activity as a teacher, in his deep sense of dependence upon God, in his combination of horror at sin with pity for the sinner, he reminds us of St. Paul; while in the depth of his self-humiliation on account of the transgressions of others, he recalls the utterances of Daniel. As a servant of the Persian king, he so approves himself to his master as to be singled out for the high trust of an important commission. In executing that commission he exhibits devotion, trust in God, honourable anxiety to discharge his duties with exactitude, and a spirit of prayer and self-mortification that cannot be too highly commended." Such a man was certainly inspired. And he would teach the people a true doctrine of the Spirit. He was a kind of second Moses. It has been truly remarked by Canon Rawlinson that "the traditions which cluster about his name, even if they had no other value, would at any rate mark the high esteem in which his abilities and character were held by his countrymen" ("Pulpit Commentary: Ezra," Introd.).

The *Book of Nehemiah* is very similar in character to that of *Ezra*, relating the circumstances connected with the rebuilding of the ruined walls of Jerusalem in 444 B.C., and their subsequent dedication. While Nehemiah himself

is not, perhaps, so pleasing a character as Ezra, somewhat rougher and fiercer, he is yet described in his book, which is called "The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah," as a man of prayer, actuated and guided by inspiration. "He fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven." He applied to God as the God who "keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love Him and observe His commandments." The sufferings of the people and the miserable state of Jerusalem are ascribed to their sins. On the basis of true repentance restoration is sought. The work of rebuilding the gates and walls of the fallen city is carried on in dependence upon the Spirit of God, and all that is done is sanctified. The opposition of the Samaritans is taken to the Throne of Grace: "Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them" (chap. iv. 9). Whatever Nehemiah does as Governor he regards as put into his heart by God. This was especially the case when, with the assistance of Ezra, the book of the Law of Moses was brought out and publicly read in the presence of the whole people. Standing upon a pulpit prepared on purpose, surrounded by the elders and leaders of the congregation, "Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God: and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. So they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly,

and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (chap. viii. 5-8). The people understood the Word of God, and felt their own unworthiness, and mourned and wept. But Nehemiah proclaimed to them the Divine forgiveness, and bade them turn their fast into a feast. But they had their time of confession and national humiliation, when they confessed their own sins and the sins of their fathers. It was on that occasion that the magnificent prayer was poured out before Jehovah which we are told was offered up by the people as a whole, through their representatives, and which is recorded in the ninth chapter. It was the renewal of the broken covenant, and it was a retrospect of the Divine dealings with Israel from the beginning. It is a distinct testimony to the work of the Spirit of God in every age. The people "dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto Thy commandments, but sinned against Thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them,) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear: yet many years didst Thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by Thy Spirit in Thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest Thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. Nevertheless for Thy great mercies' sake Thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them: for Thou art a gracious and merciful God" (chap. ix. 29-31). They took their solemn oath and covenant that they would maintain all the ordinances of God's House, and keep His Law, and in doing so they sought the help of His Spirit. The work which Nehemiah did was a work of cleansing. The people were a

holy people, and their external separation from all the idolatrous nations around was symbolical of their spiritual consecration to God. The public reading of the Scriptures was a very important event. It probably introduced into Palestine the synagogue-worship which had commenced in the time of the Captivity. The reading of the Scriptures was a chief part of the synagogue-service. It was an acknowledgment that the people henceforth placed their dependence not alone upon the performance of Temple rites, not alone upon the priesthood, but equally on the reading and understanding of the Word of God. It is a fact that they never went back to idolatry. Can it be doubted that their faithfulness so far was due to their instruction in the Scriptures? It is remarkable and full of significance that this commencement of the systematic reading and exposition of Scripture was contemporary with the close of the Old Testament Canon. Nehemiah was a fellow-labourer with the last of the prophets, and probably himself closed the book of Scripture. The appeal was thus publicly made to the work of the Spirit. The people were distinctly taught that, having the Book of God complete, what they must depend upon was the influence of the Spirit in their hearts. They must look for no more prophets, for no more sacred writings, for no more signs and wonders among them for ages—they must wait until the great promise should be fulfilled and the Messiah should appear in their midst. Thus it will be seen that synagogues were themselves a very powerful testimony to the Spirit. The people might be all taught

of God. When they came together to hear the Word of God and to exhort one another, He Himself, by His Spirit, was there in the midst of them. They were waiting for His salvation. They knew that they had a Divine help always at hand in the worship of the sanctuary. It is true that synagogues led to the multiplication of Rabbis, and Rabbis soon developed Rabbinical lore and superstition almost as degrading as the heathenism from which the people professed to have separated themselves. But we can scarcely doubt that the synagogue-worship, which dates from the fifth century onwards, promoted individual piety and the study of the Word of God, and, therefore, that it enlarged the popular view of the work of the Spirit. In harmony with this wider view of the Divine Word, the last of the prophets uttered a message which was especially directed against formalism and spiritual indifference.

*Malachi*, the last book of the Old Testament, was probably written about four hundred years before Christ. As a concluding message, and the introduction to a long period during which there would be no inspired prophets sent as of old, the four chapters of this remarkable book seem intended to lift up the thoughts of the people to a higher conception of their position and opportunities. Condemnation and judgment hang over them because of their insincerity and formality. "The priesthood is corrupt. The services of the Temple are fallen into disorder. The whole religious ceremonial has become a weariness and a loathing. There is scepticism eating away the heart of piety. Immorality is increasing in the land. Domestic



life is like a withered flower. The proud 'are called happy,' and 'they that work wickedness are set up.' Sorcery, adultery, false swearing, oppression of the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and the turning aside of the stranger from his right. Such are the flagrant sins which defile the land. And the allusion, at the end of the book, to the alienation of the children from their fathers, doubtless refers to the sceptical, rationalistic, innovating spirit, which broke out into such sayings as, 'The table of the Lord is contemptible.' 'Behold, what a weariness is it!' 'Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them.' 'Where is the God of judgment?' 'It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?' We have not far to go to find the parallel of such sayings. They are the scum of pride and irreligion floating on the top of a great seething mass of unbelief and worldliness in a time of transition, such as was the time of Ezra, and such as is the time in which we live" ("Four Centuries of Silence," p. 10).

Malachi is eminently a spiritual book. It is an appeal to the *hearts* of the people. "*I have loved you, saith the Lord.*" This is the keynote of the book. There is something especially inspiring to the people in the promise that the same Angel of Mercy who had been at the head of Israel all through the history of the past should reappear, and that to be their delight and their glory. True, it would be a terrible time for sinners. *The Day of His coming would burn like fire.* The brightness of His face would purge

their lives like "fuller's soap." But the subsequent purity and pleasantness was a prospect for all that feared the Lord and waited for Him, to keep before them. The spiritual renovation and revival would inaugurate a period of general prosperity. "All nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of Hosts." Another striking feature in this book is the very emphatic recognition of the *Church within the Church*, of the germ of a *new Israel* in the midst of the decay and rejection of the old (chap. iii. 16-18). "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." Nothing surely can more plainly testify to the doctrine of the Spirit than such language as this. The fleshly Israel is rejected, and the spiritual Israel is alone recognised. The Jew outwardly is distinguished from the Jew inwardly. The "*Residue of the Spirit*" to which the prophet refers in chapter ii. 15 is the open source of help to which the people are invited to appeal. By the Spirit it is that He will make a "*godly seed*." "*Therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.*" The Lord is One who changeth not. His mercy still repeats the invitation which has been sent by His Spirit age after age through the prophets. "*Return*

unto *Me*, and *I will return unto you*, saith the Lord of Hosts." The last of the Old Testament writings is also very clearly a testimony to the freedom and universality of the Grace of God. It is a cosmopolitan message, while it is addressed to the Jews. The priests and Levites are rebuked. But there is no exclusiveness in the message sent to them. On the other hand, the rejection of the fallen Irsael is made the opportunity for the proclamation of a universal Gospel. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering: for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts" (chap. i. 10, 11). There seems to be an allusion to this breadth of the gospel of salvation in the prediction of the "*Day of the Lord*," with which the book concludes. It is a "*day of judgment*" on the ungodly, which shall "burn up the wicked like stubble;" but it is not a mere day of destruction, it is the rising of the "Sun of Righteousness" into the heavens. There is "*healing in His wings*." Surely those who read such a prediction would recall the language of the Nineteenth Psalm, where the sun is described as lighting all the world: "His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." The language of the concluding verses evidently points to a "true revival and restoration of Israel along the lines of faithfulness to Jehovah and

His covenant." The children will not be better than their fathers by despising and trampling under foot the old things, but by developing the germ which was in the old and in the new, putting "new wine into the new wine skins," but getting the new wine out of the old vineyard. Elijah was a great reformer, but he was followed by Elisha, whose ministry extended over a much larger sphere, and was much more beneficent. The herald of the kingdom preached repentance; but the Messiah Himself baptized with the Holy Ghost, and sent forth His apostles to preach the Gospel to "every creature." So in this last message sent by the prophets the voice of a loving Father spoke. The people were invited to put away mere legalism and formalism, and live a spiritual life in fellowship with one another. They were pointed to the Temple, and bade to wait around it in simple obedience and faith until the great Messiah should be revealed and the Day of the Lord should come. Thus we see that the last voice which is heard in the Jewish Church speaks very clearly on the subject of gracious influences. With the whole of these Scriptures in their hands, those who waited for Christ were not waiting in darkness, but with the light of a rising sun along the horizon. And as they were bidden to look for the "*Sun of Righteousness*," they must certainly have expected, if they interpreted such a name by the revelations of the Old Testament, a kingdom which should be first or chiefly in the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit, which should make them to "go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." Having thus reviewed the testimony

to the Spirit, which runs through the whole body of Scriptures to the time of the close of the Old Testament Canon, it will be well to put together, briefly, the main results thus obtained.

*Firstly.* While it must be admitted that *the personality of the Holy Spirit* is not very decidedly, and certainly not dogmatically, revealed, it is evident that the Spirit is, throughout the Old Testament, a Divine agency. The action which is described is that of Intelligence; it is upon the loftiest minds, and it is the action of God. The whole of the Scripture is ascribed to the Spirit, and the many instances in which God is represented as a Trinity, while not perhaps in themselves sufficient to teach the formal dogma of the Trinity, are consistent with it. The Divine Person whom the Jews worshipped they worshipped as a Spirit; and therefore, when God distinctly speaks of Himself as acting spiritually on the minds of men, and also speaks of His Spirit as personally acting, we are not straining the language when we say that it teaches the personality of the Spirit.

*Secondly.* The *Inspiration* which is attributed to the Spirit is of the utmost breadth and variety, including not only the giving of the Word of God, but all the enlightenment whereby men are enabled to understand and fulfil the demands of their life, both earthly and super-earthly. He is "the source of intellectual excellence, of skill in handicraft, of valour, and those qualities of mind or body which give one man superiority over others." (See Rev. W. T. Bullock in art. "The Holy Spirit," Smith's "Dict. of the Bible.")

*Thirdly.* The work of the Holy Spirit is immediately connected with the whole of the religious life of God's people. He is the source of repentance and change of heart. He is the new-creator of Man. In the writings of the Old Testament are found "abundant predictions of the ordinary operations of the Spirit, which were to be most frequent in later times, and by which holiness, justice, peace, and consolation were to be spread throughout the world." In fact, the view of the work of the Spirit is that of a work of regeneration and sanctification, as in the New Testament. There is no essential difference in the doctrine of the Spirit's work.

*Fourthly.* While the work of the Spirit is thus general and uniform among the children of God, the doctrine of the Old Testament is that there are special organs of the Spirit, i.e., that certain individuals are specially inspired and specially taught and authorised, both by the works they did and by the messages they uttered. That the organs of the Spirit were recognised as such by the people of God, as in the case of Moses and Samuel and the prophets, and that as the result of the twofold seal put upon them and their work and words, the seal of God by their inspiration and miracles, and the seal of the Church by their acceptance and the obedience rendered to their messages given in the name of Jehovah, their mission left behind it the permanent record given in the written Word. This is an important testimony to the continuous and successive influence and operation of the Spirit of God in the Jewish Church.

*Fifthly.* While such specially inspired men were organs

of the Spirit, and from age to age stood as centres of the religious life of the people, there was no such thing as a limitation of the Spirit's work to individuals or their mission. The case of Eldad and Medad (in Numb. xi.) clearly shows that the free gifts of the Spirit could be sought and obtained at any time and by any individuals. Ordination was rather a solemnising of gifts, and a setting apart of holy men to their office, than a direct means by which they were communicated and the men endowed. The possibility that all the Lord's people could be, might be, prophets is clearly before us in the Old Testament throughout; and the fact that the Psalms were probably composed by a vast variety of authors shows that some measure of inspiration was very familiar to the people in all ranks and classes and conditions, and apart from official distinctions.

*Sixthly.* The continual reference, especially in the time of Israel's greatest corruption, to the *need of spiritual revival*, to the *efficacy of prayer*, and to the promise that God would *pour out His Spirit* eventually *on all flesh*, upon which should be brought about a restoration of the national state and renewal of Divine favour, is a proclamation of the doctrine of free grace. The Spirit is for all, without respect of persons. There is no limit to the Holy One of Israel. He is infinitely gracious, and the Spirit and the Bride are always saying, "Come." The waters which flow out of the Temple are abundant enough to cover the whole earth and heal all nations; and the message which is given to God's chosen people, and for the unbelieving withholding of which from the world they

were so severely chastened, is the message of Universal Salvation. If the Lord Jesus Christ had come immediately after the close of the Old Testament Canon, He might as truly have said then as He said four hundred years afterwards, "I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. Until heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 17, 18).



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE TESTIMONY OF JEWISH LITERATURE TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRIT, FROM THE CLOSE OF THE OLD TES- TAMENT CANON TO THE TIME OF CHRIST.

THERE is a great deal that is deeply interesting in the study of the period intervening between the Old Testament and the New. The fact itself is full of significance that the Jewish Rabbis should not attempt to enlarge the body of their sacred Scriptures by adding any of the books written after the time of Malachi to those which are now included in the Old Testament. It is certain that the Temple services were for a considerable period after the Return from Captivity maintained with great pomp and splendour. The high priests obtained a great deal of political power, and virtually became rulers of the land under the Persian satrap of Syria. But the religious life of the people rapidly declined. The leading men were corrupt. Political confusion and military excitement prevailed for generations. It is exceedingly doubtful if there was any religious writing published among the Jews for more than a century. There was a widespread feeling that no one was inspired enough to speak in the name of God. Hence the Scriptures already in their hands became "*hedged about*" with a reverence which rapidly

degenerated into superstition. The Pentateuch, which was regarded as the basis on which the whole economy of the nation was founded, and on which the religious services of the Temple were maintained, was expounded by a class of men who gave themselves up to the study of Scripture, but who never claimed themselves to be inspired. Scribes were, in fact, those who preserved what was written, not themselves writers. The distinction which was made, very clearly emphasised at that time between the Law and the Prophets, reminds us that there was a similar distinction in the religious life of the people themselves. The Scribes promoted the idea that observance of the Law, *i.e.*, living by the rule of the Pentateuch, was the requirement made of the people. The historical and prophetic writings were received as inspired, but the chief value attached to them was that they kept alive the hope of future glory for Israel. Those who thought little of that hope studied the Prophets little. Those whose chief aim was to be great amongst their contemporaries, to obtain priestly power and sanctity in the eyes of their nation, made much of legal observances, and felt no need of spiritual quickening. There was for a time a "certain uniform culture of religion and morals" in the people as a whole. But there was no inspiration; there was no lamentation that it was wanting. It is very sad to observe the rapid decline in the religious state of the leading men. The high priests became fearfully depraved, and the whole nation seems to have lost all desire to shake off the tyranny of their corrupt rulers. The remarkable events which had led to their restoration from captivity were due, in some

degree, to the influence which their Scriptures had upon Gentile powers. The Persian monarch was deeply impressed with the character of the Jewish religion, and we may believe was wrought upon by the Spirit of God to deal with them kindly. And, in a similar manner, when the Great Alexander, by his conquests, removed the seat of empire from Persia to Macedonia, and the Jews came under his sway both in Palestine and Egypt, it was largely owing to the influence which learned Jews exercised, through their Scriptures, upon the Gentile rulers that a new Judaism sprang up in Alexandria, which rapidly associated itself with the intellectual and religious life of the Greek world. No doubt Alexandrian Jews were very learned men. The contact of Judaism with Greek philosophy and culture liberalised the minds of many. To some extent they were helped by it to be rid of their formalism and national prejudices. But the rationalistic spirit which prevailed at Alexandria was not the work of the Spirit of God. The mysticism which grew up in the Alexandrian school was not the legitimate result of the Old Testament. The effect of Alexandrianism on the older school of Jews which remained in Palestine was to make them stricter and severer in their legalism, but not to bring them nearer to God. *Simon the Just* is the type of their aspirations: "Be careful in judgments, set up many Talmidim (learned students), and make a hedge about the Law." The permanence of the world, said this typical religious leader, *i.e.*, the greatness and prosperity of Judaism, depends on faithfulness to the written Law and its observance, on

worship; that is, separation from the Gentiles and their philosophy and works of righteousness. He exalted purity of life, and, to a certain extent, he called upon the people to be pure in thought and feeling. But such a man reveals to us the sad spiritual degeneracy of the people. They were becoming mere worshippers of the letter of the Law. Rabbinical traditions took the place of Scripture. Formalism, Ritualism, Scholasticism, all the bondage which settles down upon a people when they put inspiration into the past and trust rather in what they have been and the writings of the "Fathers" than in the living presence and operation of the Spirit of God, sank the Jews lower and lower, both intellectually and morally, until they seemed God-forsaken, and were rapidly sinking into ruin.

Now, it was during the period of religious decline and spiritual deadness that there appeared among the Jews a number of writers of different kinds, some of whose works are embodied in the Apocrypha, and others are outside that collection, but all alike regarded as without any Divine authority. There were historians, poets, and sacred writers, who wrote under the names of inspired men, apocalyptic books, like the "Book of Enoch," "The Sybilline Oracles," "The Psalter of Solomon," "The Book of Jubilees," and others, and works of wisdom and philosophy. It is evident from these writings that the religious tone of the people was much lower when they were written than when the Canon of the Old Testament closed. There was a great deal of superstition among them. They were ready to believe in very foolish legendary stories, and they were not offended by the spurious

employment of great names, such as Ezra, Daniel, Esther, Jeremiah, and Solomon. If they had not been in a very low religious state, they would not have suffered such abuse of authority. We find also in the Apocrypha not only a ritualistic extravagance, which bespeaks a lack of the Spirit of God, but a distinct advocacy of external righteousness as a ground of merit in the sight of God (see Ecclesiasticus xv., and Tobit iv. 7-11; xii. 9). Hence the value which the corrupt Church of Rome has placed upon such writings, which by the Decree of the Council of Trent are included in the Canon. There is a great deal of a false national pride in these later books, and a mere rhetorical hero-worship, entirely opposed to the humility and spirituality which we find in the Old Testament. The Book of the Maccabees is full of patriotism and enthusiasm, but it is not the calm confidence of a people living near to God. "There is nothing throughout the Apocrypha which bears witness to anything like a diffused and sustained religious life. The prophets were long gone, and the prophetic spirit had not returned. The sages had taken their place, and instead of Divine messages were wise sayings and lofty flights of eloquence, and attempts to clothe the predictions of the ancient times with the new dress of sensational realism. All was in vain. Rabbinism with its traditionalism, Pharisaism with its worship of the letter of the Law, swallowed up every other form of religion, except in a few chosen spirits in the nation. The stricter Jewish life became narrowed into a hateful bigotry and intolerance and exclusiveness."

But notwithstanding the religious degeneracy, there is a testimony to the doctrine of the Spirit even in writings which themselves have proceeded from a people but little under the influence of His inspiration. Indeed, the fact that such books were kept apart from Scripture testifies to the belief which still remained in a higher spiritual teaching which could be regarded as of Divine authority. There are two books in the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus and The Wisdom of Solomon, which afford very clear and decided evidence to the doctrine of the Spirit after the second century B.C. They are books which, no doubt, both proceeded from the school of sages, or the religio-philosophical school of Alexandria. The aim of the former book, *The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach*, was to commend the wisdom of the Jews to the wise men of the Gentiles; and the aim of the latter, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, was to commend the wisdom of Gentile philosophers to the Jews, so that while proceeding from two different directions, the purpose and spirit of the two books is much the same. The one is Jewish and the other Alexandrian, but both are on the ground of the supreme authority of Scripture. Ecclesiasticus was written probably about 180 B.C. It is regarded as purely Jewish and Palestinian, written in Hebrew, translated into Greek by the author's grandson. It is full of a mild and gentle spirit, and was intended to attract the Gentile world, while at the same time it magnifies Judaism and the heroes of the Jewish antiquity. The very opening words remind us that Inspiration was believed to be the source of all true wisdom. "All wisdom

cometh from the Lord, and is with Him for ever" (chap. i. 1). The true wisdom cometh from the true obedience. The personality of Wisdom is implied throughout, and we are reminded of the language of the Book of Proverbs. The teaching of the whole work, while somewhat prudential and savouring a little of the Scribes, is still elevated and pure. The heart-searching wisdom of God is put in contrast with the folly of Man, and the poor and humble are invited to be strong and rich through communion with God's Spirit. All the good that is in man is ascribed to Divine gifts. "Counsel, and a tongue, and eyes, ears, and a heart, gave He them to understand. Withal He filled them with the knowledge of understanding, and showed them good and evil. He set His eye upon their hearts, that He might show them the greatness of His works. He gave them to glory in His marvellous acts for ever, that they might declare His works with understanding. And the elect shall praise His Holy name" (chap. xvii. 6-10). Notwithstanding the sins of God's people, if they return to Him, He will be gracious to them, and "lead them out of darkness into the light of health." "He that hath small understanding and feareth God, is better than one that hath much wisdom and transgresseth the law of the Most High." "A prayer out of a poor man's mouth reacheth to the ears of God, and His judgment cometh speedily." A beautiful prayer is poured out before God for grace to flee from sin (chap. xxiii.), and for the Church against her enemies (chap. xxxvi.). "The Law of the Most High" is the source from which the

wise man draws his wisdom. And when he hath found it, "he shall show forth that which he hath learned, and shall glory in the law of the covenant of the Lord" (chap. xxix. 8). In the forty-third chapter is a very beautiful ascription of praise to God as the Creator, and it closes with an adoration of His Spirit as the Spirit of Wisdom: "To the godly He hath given wisdom." Several chapters are occupied with the praise of famous men, and the fathers which begat us. Their greatness is ascribed entirely to God, and the writer tells us in the conclusion of his book that he wrestled and prayed for wisdom, and whatever he has put into his writings, it was the gift of God: "The Lord hath given me a tongue for my reward, and I will praise Him therewith. Draw near unto me, ye unlearned, and dwell in the house of learning." The book as a whole gives us the idea of a people possessed of sound doctrine, though trusting too much in the letter of the Law. The devoutness is rather an external and formal reverence than a deep living spirit of fellowship with God. The wisdom which is commended and the examples which are held forth to our admiration are of the old Jewish sort, very different from the New Testament teaching. And yet the language of Ecclesiasticus testifies very decidedly to the belief, as current among the Jews a century and a half before the coming of Christ, in personal, individual, and unlimited gifts of the Spirit of God. Any one can become wise and good and follow in the footsteps of the great heroes and saints of the past by listening to the voice of wisdom, and fearing the Lord and walking in His ways, and, like Jesus the



Son of Sirach, wrestling with God in prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit upon him. With such a book in their hands the people would certainly be prepared for the appearance of a great Prophet at any time. There was assuredly no denial of any of the truth taught in the Old Testament, although, doubtless, the rise of the Rabbinical school and the influence of a great body of traditions collected together by the successive teachers did "make the Word of God of none effect." They could not deny the plain declarations of Scripture, but they overlaid them with glosses and drew away the attention of the people from the consoling truths and promises of God to their miserable "*hedge about the Law*," which was a formal and external obedience hiding the real poverty of the heart. As opposed to the Palestinian school of strictest Judaism, the broader spirit of the Alexandrian teachers, who sought to receive into their own religion the culture of a philosophic heathenism, introduced a freer interpretation of Scripture and fixed attention more upon the substance of Revelation.

It is impossible to say when the Book of Wisdom was first published, but it certainly was considerably later than Ecclesiasticus, and is a product of the Alexandrian school. It has been ascribed to Philo himself, but it is probably something like a century before his time. It is an attempt to mingle together philosophy and Judaism. The writer seems to have been of the school of Plato. As a testimony from the Jews it is not of much value, because its language is borrowed very frequently from other sources than the Old Testament.

At the same time, as it is evident that it aimed at a reconciliation between the Greek philosophy and Judaism, we may fairly say that it represents the belief which was current among a considerable portion of the Jewish people about a hundred years before Christ. As in Ecclesiasticus, there is a personification of Wisdom which is plainly borrowed from the Book of Proverbs, which points to the personality of the Spirit. The pantheistic universality which is ascribed to the Spirit may be Platonic, but it would certainly be intended to harmonise with the language of the Old Testament. Take, *e.g.*, the three verses (5-7) of the first chapter: "*For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in. For wisdom is a loving spirit; and will not acquit a blasphemer of his words; for God is witness of his reins, and a true beholder of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue. For the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world; and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice.*" In the seventh chapter wisdom is said to be given in answer to prayer: "I prayed, and understanding was given me. I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me." And the personification of wisdom is very distinct. The following passage, while decidedly savouring of heathen philosophy, is yet, as appearing in a book addressed to Jews and on behalf of the Jewish religion, a remarkable testimony to the popular belief in spiritual influences: "For Wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me: for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, One

only, manifold, subtile, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtile spirits. For wisdom is more moving than any motion; she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty; therefore can no defiled thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the Everlasting Light, the unspotted mirror of the Power of God, and the image of His goodness. And being but One, she can do all things; and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new; and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets. For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with Wisdom" (chap. vii. 22-28). In the eighth chapter there is a very distinct reference to the Stoic philosophy in verse 7, but in verses 19-21 wisdom is ascribed to Divine Grace: "For I was a witty child, and had a good spirit. Yea, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled. Nevertheless, when I perceived that I could not otherwise obtain her, except God gave her me; and that was a point of wisdom also to know whose gift she was; I prayed unto the Lord and besought Him, and with my whole heart I said"—and then follows a prayer in some respects worthy of Solomon, but much too philosophical for a Jew to utter before contact with the philosophies of the Gentile nations. In verse 17 the Holy Spirit is mentioned by name: "*And*

*Thy counsel who hath known, except Thou give wisdom, and send Thy Holy Spirit from above?"* Reference is then made to the men and events of past times, and all is ascribed to Divine agency and wisdom: "*For Thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things*" (chap. xii. 1). As we read this very remarkable book we are reminded how far the Jews of that age, a century before Christ, had fallen away from the simplicity and believing obedience which expressed itself in the Psalms. There is not much difference between the philosophical pride which runs through the Book of Wisdom and the Rabbinical pride which "*made the Word of God of none effect*" through traditions. The spirit which finds expression in such books is seen in all its extent and in the highest possible development in the writings of Philo. He is pre-eminently the philosophical Jew, and we see what a miserable failure the Old Testament became in the hands of such men, for they simply read into it their speculations and fancies and mystical dreams, despising the Truth which was expressed in the letter of the Word because they professed to be able to find the secret Spirit under it. Philo's chief characteristic is his doctrine of the Logos, a doctrine which he may be said to have drawn from philosophical mysticism, but which he believed to be in the Old Testament, and which is certainly to be found in the Book of Wisdom. But steeped as he was in Platonism, he has given to the doctrine of the Logos an idealistic form which removes his teaching from that of Scripture very considerably. Philo writes as a Jew, but as a Jew who has studied closely

the writings of the Greeks, and is far more anxious that his people should be reconciled with the Schools than that they should realise the ideal of the Theocracy set forth in the Old Testament. "The underlying principle in all His comments on the Old Testament is that of a universal truth communicated to men in every age and every nation, in greater or less degree, but pre-eminently revealed in the Books of Moses." The Alexandrian school did much harm to the Jews, though it may have been employed by God as an instrument to prepare the way for Christianity. There are many beautiful sentiments in Philo, but it is evident that such a form of Judaistic thought was a very poor substitute for the inspiration of prophets and psalmists. He was more nearly allied to the Rabbinical school than to the school of the Old Testament, and there is very little in his doctrine which can be compared with the doctrine of the Spirit as it was proclaimed very soon after his time by the preachers of the Gospel. In such a teaching there is very little more than the exaltation of human reason and the justification of intellectual pride. The best we can say for Philo, and all that breathed the same spirit, is that they were groping their way towards the truth in a darkness which was made partly by their own neglect of God's Word, and partly by their listening too much to the speculations of men who were blind leaders of the blind. But notwithstanding that such men were themselves unenlightened, they bore witness to the fact that those who were regarded as having more light than others derived their light from God. If any

man spoke as a wise man, he professed to be an inspired man. But we are struck with the difference of tone in such men as Philo from those who really spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The prophet did not speculate; he did not give forth his words as words which he had fetched out of the depth of his inner consciousness; he did not try to clothe his messages in the language of the Schools, nor did he speak with a vague, uncertain voice, as though he was afraid of bringing down his words to the level of the common mind. He spake with authority; he spake as one whom God had sent, and whose voice even kings and rulers were bound to obey, because it was a voice from Heaven. The doctrine of several senses or interpretations of the written Word of God, the historical, the allegorical; the meaning for the common man and the meaning for the wise or inspired man; is a doctrine of human pride and self-exaltation. But in the midst of all the darkness and superstition and false philosophy which prevailed during the two hundred years preceding our Lord's advent, there was still a testimony preserved to the Inspiration of the past and a faith still maintained in the personality and work of the Spirit.

Before passing away from the intervening period between the close of the Old Testament Canon and the appearance of our Saviour, a few remarks must be made upon the state of mind which we may judge to have been generally prevalent throughout Palestine before the first dawn of Gospel light. What may we suppose to have been the thoughts which the people had on the

subject of the Spirit's work and influence? In answering this question we ought to put aside such instances as Philo and the more speculative thinkers, who would not be likely to sway the minds of the people at large. We must also bear in recollection that, during the Herodian period, there was a great deal of moral corruption and political confusion and disorder in Palestine, which, while it kept many away from practical religion, did not directly shape their belief in any way. But there was one common thought, which became more and more powerful as time went on, which ought to be taken into account. The people all believed that in their ancient Scriptures there was the promise and prediction of a great personal Deliverer, and they must have understood, even if they expected a great prince and political leader, that the Messiah would be full of the Holy Spirit. They had the idea before their minds, and there is very distinct evidence of it in the early Rabbinical writings, that a man could be the very embodiment of the Spirit. Indeed the language which was employed about the Messiah scarcely fell short of His identification with God. The people, therefore, would be familiar with the thought of a supernaturally inspired man; and as we find that they readily accepted the view that Jesus was one of the old prophets come back, and did expect, according to the saying of the scribes, that Elijah would reappear, we may conclude that the general fact of special Divine gifts bestowed on individuals at different times would be part of their current belief. But over against this belief in inspiration we must place the influence of Rabbinism in

all its various forms. The country was full of synagogues, but those synagogues were not, as they ought to have been, the centres of free and loving brotherly fellowship and mutual instruction in the Scriptures. They were in the hands of *Rabbis*, who, as their name signified, sought to have dominion as "*Masters*" over the thoughts and lives of the people. Priestism was, perhaps, nearly worn out when Christ appeared. The journeys of the people three times a year to Jerusalem had some effect in keeping up the feeling of reverence for the Temple and the Temple-worship; but except a general respect for the high priest and an observance of the leading commandments of the Jewish ritual, the Jewish people, as a whole, were not in bondage to priests, and were not extremely ritualistic. But there is no doubt that the teaching of the *Rabbis* and the spirit they promoted throughout the synagogues were repressive of spiritual life. If we may judge of what they gave to the people, both in the *Halukah*, or direct rules of the Law, and in the *Haggadah*, or exposition and illustration of the Divine commandments, as we find them afterwards in the writings of the *Rabbis*, instead of deep and living truth, such as came directly from the Spirit of God, they filled them with miserable scrupulosities and distinctions, legends and fables, and a semi-mystical thought which wrapped the conscience in a false security, and stifled the best aspirations of the heart. The question which would be stirred up in the mind would be, Do I know what the great authorities say; am I a satisfactory servant of the Lord? Or, am I near to the great man whose opinions and



decisions are continually quoted: have I left anything undone, have I done anything amiss? The safeguard against this bondage of the Rabbis was the free constitution of the Jewish Church and the preservation and authority of the Scriptures. After all, any member of the synagogue could speak when the Holy Spirit moved him to speak, and none would hinder him. As we see plainly in the New Testament, and as we may see still in the modern synagogue-worship, while the Rabbi is the leader of the congregation, all are invited, if they have any word of profit, to speak. And the Old Testament was regularly read. The people who came together to hear it must have been familiar with the letter of it, just as those who attend the services in our English churches have a great part of the Bible solemnly recited before them. The Holy Spirit did speak to our fathers. That they all believed. He has not spoken in the same manner for hundreds of years. The promises are there in the Scripture that He will speak again, that His Grace shall be poured out, that wonderful signs shall be seen once more, and that our sons and daughters, men-servants and handmaids, shall prophesy. Here and there through the land there were to be found individual instances which must have reminded the people that inspiration was not limited to past ages. When Jesus actually came, He came into the midst of a group of people who were full of the Holy Ghost. There is no indication of astonishment in the minds of those who heard devout men and women pour forth beautiful words

of hope and faith. They knew that the Spirit of God still wrought in the spirit of man. Prophets and prophetesses—messengers come from God, and even workers of miracles, might appear at any moment. Thus the Day of Grace was already beginning to dawn.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AS TAUGHT IN THE FOUR GOSPELS AND UNTIL THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

IT must strike every attentive reader of the New Testament as a remarkable fact that while the Holy Spirit, His presence, operations, and gifts, are referred to on almost every page, from the first to the last, there is no statement either by the Lord or by any of His apostles, or by any writer in the volume, of any novelty or change in the popular belief on the subject. There is an intimation, as in John vii. 39, that after the Saviour's ascension and glorification, the Spirit was in some sense "given," though the word "given" is not in the original Greek, and the meaning may be simply that on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Ghost was received in a special form and degree. But the Gospel narrative takes for granted the same belief on the subject of the Spirit which we have seen to have been for many ages that of the Jewish people, and which we may suppose was brought into the thoughts of the more earnest and devout among them with special distinctness and prominence when the Messianic Hope was at its height, and when the political depression of the nation must have led them to cry out very loudly to their God for His quickening and saving

help. Mr. Bullock, in his article on the Holy Spirit in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," makes the following remarks, which are amply justified by the review of the Old Testament, and of the four centuries between Malachi and Christ, which we have taken:—"In the New Testament, both in the teaching of our Lord and in the narratives of the events which preceded His ministry and occurred in its course, the existence and agency of the Holy Spirit are frequently revealed, and are mentioned in such a manner as shows that these facts were part of the common belief of the Jewish people at that time. Theirs was, in truth, the ancient faith, but more generally entertained, which looked upon prophets as inspired teachers, accredited by the power of working signs and wonders. It was made plain to the understanding of the Jews of that age, that the same Spirit who wrought of old amongst the people of God was still at work. 'The dove forsook the ark of Moses and fixed its dwelling in the Church of Christ'" (Bull, "On Justification," Diss. ii. chap. xi. § 7). It is of the greatest importance that this fact of the continuity of faith on the subject of the Holy Ghost should be before us in our examination of the New Testament. It will certainly help us when we come to consider such questions as the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and the gifts of the Day of Pentecost. If the Four Gospels were put into the hands of a heathen reader who was totally ignorant of the Old Testament, would he not be startled at the very opening pages by such language as this: "*She was found with child of the Holy Ghost*" (Matt. i.

18); "*I indeed have baptized you with water: but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost*" (Mark i. 8); "*He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb,*" speaking of John the Baptist (Luke i. 15); "*I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him*" (John i. 32)? Surely the uninstructed reader would require to be informed to whom the evangelist refers under the name Holy Ghost, and what was the belief on which such statements were founded. Some would perhaps think it proper in order to satisfy such an inquiry, to introduce the reader to the beliefs of the Christian Church about the middle of the first century and until the beginning of the second, when the Gospels were published. It might be said, these narratives were sent forth for the sake of those who were attaching themselves to Christianity, and they presupposed the current faith of Christians. But it must be remembered that the first preachers of the Gospel were Jews, and that the first audiences they addressed were Jews. The Gospels were written for Jews and Gentiles alike, and the fact that they were not published until some thirty years at least after the Lord's ascension, while during these thirty years the Old Testament itself was the only Bible in the hands of the Christian preachers, plainly proves that the current belief of the Jews, founded on the authority of the Old Testament, was taken for granted as the basis on which the superstructure of Christianity was built up. In no sense, therefore, was the doctrine of the Spirit, as proclaimed by Christ and His disciples, a new doctrine;

although, of course, the facts of the Gospel gave it a new sanction, and a new illustration and expansion, which brought it before the whole world, as though it were a mystery hidden from ages and generations, and then for the first time revealed.

The first step, therefore, to understand the teaching of the Four Gospels on the subject of the Spirit, is to inquire into the deeply interesting group of facts and persons which meet us at the opening of the Gospel narrative, thirty years before the commencement of the Saviour's ministry. Before Jesus began to preach, and therefore before the very wonderful facts of His mature life and works are recorded, what signs are there that the people were prepared for supernatural gifts in individuals, and for words and works which could only be ascribed to direct action of God through human lips and hands? Now, it is very clear from the Gospel story, and especially from the accounts given in the first and the third Gospels, that while there was a widespread expectation among the Jewish people that some great deliverance would be wrought by God on behalf of His people, there was very little of what may be called deeply religious feeling mingled with that expectation in the higher classes and among the national leaders. Under the spell of the Rabbis, nearly the whole nation was blinded. They looked for a great Teacher, for a great Prophet, for a great Reformer. But they were carried away by the thought of victory over external enemies. They did not care to study the Old Testament promises in the light of Old Testament history. They did not search into their

own hearts to know what changes were needed. They hated Christ when He came, because He went too deeply into their spiritual state, and declared that the judgments which would introduce the Kingdom of God must begin at the House of God, with the Jews themselves and their religious professions. The author has dealt with this subject in the work before referred to, "Four Centuries of Silence," chapter xi., "The Dawning Light." The following remarks may be quoted here as an introduction to what follows:—"It would be a great mistake to suppose that there were no exceptions to this widespread perversion of the Jewish mind. The synagogues were under the influence of the Rabbis. The Rabbis no doubt were chiefly guided by the traditional views which were enforced upon them by their leaders. The tone of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem would be given to all the synagogues, more or less, throughout the land. But times of great national suffering and depression generally favour independence of thought and individuality of character. The religious life of the people is called out into more practical expression. 'They that fear the Lord speak often one to another.' The humbler worshippers in the sanctuary have their minds awakened to attend to the signs of the times. The Scriptures are the ready resort of such inquirers. They have no opportunity of mingling with the great and learned. In their own homes, and in the privacy of their own chambers, they are asking the question, 'O Lord, how long! When shall the salvation of Israel come out of Zion?' There are plain indications in the Gospel narrative of such

awakening faith and prayerful inquiry. There were those who are described as '*waiting for the consolation of Israel.*' Look at some of the facts. First, in Jerusalem, at the very centre of Judaism, there was a very striking testimony to the power and operation of the Holy Spirit. There was an inspired person there. 'There was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity. And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day' (Luke ii. 36-38). And again, we read of the aged Simeon, 'And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the Temple' (Luke ii. 25, 26). Here was an inspired woman and also an inspired man. The woman is called a prophetess; therefore we may presume she not only fasted and prayed, but lifted up her voice in prophetic messages and exhortations to the people. She spoke of Jesus 'to all those that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.' There were many who listened to her besides those immediately surrounding the infant Saviour. She reminds us of the ancient Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and her long prophesying was a sign that the time of Divine favour was coming. Simeon was not only an inspired man, but under the



special supernatural guidance of the Spirit he was led to the Temple, and praised God for the fulfilment of His promise when he took up the Child in his arms, in whom he recognised by inspiration the coming Redeemer. These are striking facts, and the words which were uttered at that time were full of the Holy Ghost, and of the very essence of the Old Testament revelation and prophecy. How can we doubt that these were only the leaders and representatives of a number of faithful souls at that time full of the Holy Ghost, the true 'remnant according to the election of Grace' in a corrupt nation? The highest peaks caught the light first, but it soon flowed into the lower regions of the same elevated land, where faith and hope lifted up the humble poor and the pious worshippers into fellowship with Heaven. The narrative takes us from the city of Jerusalem to the hill country of Judea, and down to the towns and villages of Galilee, from the precincts of the Temple and the religious centre of the nation to the homes of peasants and a secluded pastoral district. We look into the house of Zechariah and Elizabeth; we are on the hills with the pious shepherds 'keeping watch over their flocks by night,' and ready to receive a message from the King. All these people were filled with the Holy Ghost. We go to Nazareth, and to the household of Joseph and Mary. Is it possible to conceive a more beautiful example of simple devout life? The inspiration which was poured out on such simple-minded people would correspond with their accustomed thoughts. They were familiar with the Psalms and the Prophets, and the utterances which came forth from their lips were steeped

in the very spirit of Old Testament preaching and prophecy. Dr. Edersheim has shown that the hymn of Zacharias closely corresponds with ancient Jewish prayers, but those prayers were derived from the prophets. In the case of the Virgin Mary, not only is the fact of the Incarnation itself a testimony to her spirituality, but her inspiration is seen in the Magnificat. She is 'the handmaid of the Lord,' filled with theocratic feeling, with the sense of Divine favour, and with submission to the will of the Most High. She is not only pious in the sense of obedience to the Divine commands and observant of religious ordinances, but she is in a very elevated state of mind, thinking much of the Messiah and His Kingdom, possibly thinking of herself as one who, being in the line of David, might be chosen of the Lord to be His anointed priestess. Such a character as Mary's throws a light retrospectively on the prophets and inspired men of previous ages. They must have been something like her in the simplicity and purity and heavenliness of their natures, by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; and hence, as they were thus sanctified, they became meet vessels for the Master's use, in conveying His messages to the world. Inspiration attracts inspiration. Mary made haste to visit her kinswoman in the hill country of Judea, by the direction of the angel Gabriel. 'The two women stood in each other's presence as mutual witnesses to the truth of the Divine Word, beaming in each other's eyes with the Light of the celestial world.' It has been well said of the sacred music which burst forth in the house of Zacharias, 'It was the antiphonal morning-psalmody of the Messianic Day as it broke,

of which the words were still all of the Old Dispensation, but their music of the New; the keynote being that of 'favour,' 'grace,' and struck by the angel in his first salutation; 'favour' to the Virgin; 'favour,' 'eternal favour' to all His humble and poor ones; and 'favour' to Israel, stretching in golden line from the calling of Abraham to the glorious future that now opened. Not one of these fundamental ideas but lay chiefly within the range of the Old Testament; and yet all of them working beyond it, rather in the golden light of the new day' (Edersheim). The Magnificat itself is the product of immediate inspiration, upon meditation and the study of Hannah's song in 1 Sam. ii. 1-10. It is at the same time borrowed and original, like many of the prophetic utterances in the Old Testament. The devout religious art of the Middle Ages glorified the Madonna, but a true sentiment underlay it notwithstanding its connection with the corruptions of a false Church. 'No human art can ever do justice to the loveliness of such a piety. By looking closely at that lily-blossom out of the Dispensation which was passing away, we are prepared to hail the advent of Him who gathered up all the past into Himself, who at once satisfied the yearning which the ages of revelation had left behind them in the heart of man, and opened a new Kingdom, a Kingdom of Heaven, to all believers.' For thirty years after the birth of the Saviour we are left without any continuous record of the state of Palestine; but the glimpse which we catch in the slight notices of the childhood of Jesus enables us to see that even the young were noticed at that time when they were specially

marked by their piety and beauty of character. Jesus 'grew and waxed strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom; and the Grace of God was upon Him,' *i.e.*, manifestly to the eyes of His neighbours. He 'increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man' (Luke ii. 40, 52). Such notices of youthful piety betoken an atmosphere of calm and restful appreciation of the things that are excellent. There was certainly, even so long before the public appearance of the Messiah, a partial revival in some parts of the Jewish nation, though no doubt it was almost entirely confined to the humble people, where such spiritual work generally does commence. That generation had nearly passed away before these few faint streaks of light on the horizon broadened out into the blaze of Gospel Day."

The next point in the Gospel history is the mission and work of John the Baptist in the wilderness of Judea. That requires an attentive consideration. Let us put together the different statements of the evangelists exactly as they are introduced in the narrative, for it is important to notice how the mission of the Baptist is described. As we have seen, it was no unknown thing that an inspired person, a prophet or prophetess, should be seen and heard in Jerusalem or elsewhere. The fact that the Holy Spirit rested upon individuals, and that under His influence they uttered inspired language, was quite familiar, and witnessed in the cases of Simeon and Anna, Zachariah and Elizabeth, and the Virgin Mary. Hence we can understand the quiet manner in which the statement is made that a

great preacher appeared in the wilderness. Matthew says: "In those days came (*παράγινεται*) John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight" (chap. iii. 1-3). Mark's account is very similar, but is remarkable in this respect that John's mission is announced as the beginning of the Gospel: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send My messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance (*μετανοίας*) for the remission of sins" (*εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*) (chap. i. 1-4). Luke puts the matter somewhat more after the manner of the Old Testament account of the appearance of a prophet. "The word of God came (*ἐγένετο ῥῆμα Θεοῦ ἐπὶ Ἰωάννῃν*) unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the (or a) baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (*βάπτισμα μετανόας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*) (chap. iii. 2, 3). The notice in John's Gospel is again different because it is described in harmony with a different representation of the Saviour's mission. He is the Light of the world. John's position is that of a witness to the Light, rather than a prophet heralding another prophet or a preacher of repentance

with a view to the remission of sins. It is a remarkable fact that in the Fourth Gospel John's preaching is not called the preaching of repentance, but only the voice crying, "Make straight the way of the Lord." "There was a man sent from God (*ἀπεσταλμενος παρὰ θεοῦ*), whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness (*μαρτυρίῃ*) of that Light" (chap. i. 6-8). "John bare witness of Him." "And this is the record (*ἡ μαρτυρία*) of John." "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." "I baptize with water" (chap. i. 15, 19, 23, 26). Now, this appearance of a great preacher in the wilderness as preparatory to the coming of the Messiah is a distinct break with the old Judaism, and a very emphatic appeal to the people to ask for the Spirit of God and respect His operations. Although the son of a priest himself, John did not attach himself to the Temple at Jerusalem. Although the Word of God was in his heart, he is not a Rabbi, and does not speak as a Rabbi. He came in the spirit and power of the ancient Elijah, and very much in the same manner and appearance. He is not a learned man; he is not a man of the world; he represents no sect and no party. He is set forth and authorised by no great men of the nation. "He is a man completely by himself, who for some years had been passing from wilderness to wilderness for the purpose of solitary meditation and study, and also perhaps that he might look with his own eyes upon

some of the remarkable religious devotees who had retired into the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea and the Jordan, and lived lives of great simplicity and piety. He was certainly more at home in such places and among such people than in the scenes of strife and religious bigotry, and dead, corrupting formalism round the Temple of Jerusalem. There was no nurture for such a spirit as his to be found among scribes and Pharisees, Herodians and Sadducees." What was wanted was a clear atmosphere like the atmosphere of the wilderness, that the souls of men might be brought face to face with the heart-searching God. What was wanted was a voice which should speak not in the old worn-out, dogmatic language and hair-splitting scrupulosity of the scribes and Pharisees; not in the mere theological dialect of the schools, or in the conventional stiffness and propriety of the synagogue, but as with the Voice of the Spirit of God direct from Heaven, a voice which should be like the voice of an ancient prophet, and which should repeat and enforce the messages of the Old Testament. What was wanted was a preacher to wake up the careless and the dead, and, at the same time, one who should be able to say, "I am the messenger of God, sent to announce to you the coming of the Saviour." Now, it is remarkable that John should be described as a *Voice*. He was that and very little more. He set up no services, he commenced no society, he ordained no rites, for his baptism was not ordained by him for perpetuity, but simply in order to prepare for the baptism which should follow. But the grand distinction of John was that he *preached*,

that he repeated the call to repentance and a holy life which sounded through the Old Testament, and which was the one great cry of the prophets. Undoubtedly when John preached repentance he proclaimed the presence and the operation of the Holy Spirit. He did not teach the multitudes that an external reformation was a true preparation for the Kingdom of Heaven. The *repentance* he preached was *change of mind*—spiritual repentance—that which should bring forth fruits in their lives, and which should prove them true children of Abraham. The Kingdom of Heaven which he announced was one which would be prepared for by such a change of mind. It was a Kingdom in which the Spirit of God would rule, and the external form of the Kingdom would be that which would express that which was internal, the life of God in the soul of man. The proclamation which John made of an immediate coming of the Kingdom is interpreted by the facts. What he meant was, that the King was at hand, and that the Grace which would come with Him and through Him would be Grace sufficient for all things—which had in it infinite promise. We have but very scanty notices of John's preaching. There is no need of more than we have. It was very simple and very practical. We scarcely require to know much about the language employed. But this we are told, that great multitudes were deeply moved by it, and submitted to baptism under the influence of the Spirit of God because they felt that they were sinners, and in their confession expressed their faith and hope in expectation of the coming Kingdom of Grace. It was the



publicans and sinners, the people generally, who came under the power of the Baptist. The scribes and Pharisees held aloof from him because they did not feel their need of such a salvation as that which he proclaimed. The keynote of John's preaching is that which the fourth evangelist gives us, "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!*" (John i. 29). The ritualistic righteousness which had been trusted in so long among the Jews was worthless. The true cleansing was not with rites and ceremonies, but with the precious blood of the Divine Sacrifice.

John therefore preached a doctrine of the Holy Ghost which was substantially the same as the Christian, though it was not possible that he should preach it in all its fulness and freeness as it was proclaimed by the apostles after the Day of Pentecost. Never let us forget that the Church of the Jews, as it then was, was given up to Ritualism and Rabbinism. John came forward distinctly as the opponent of such a system. He came to prepare the way for the great revolution which was about to begin, by which all the old superstitions would be swept away; and if the Jewish people would not be led forth out of their bondage into Gospel liberty, then the nation must be destroyed and Jerusalem itself laid in ruins. It was the promise of the Old Testament that all the people should be prophets; they should be all taught by God; they should all be kings and priests. The preaching of John, therefore, was an invitation to rejoice in the Light and become children of Light. "The Rabbis had lost this great truth

in their miserable pedantry. The very conception of personal inspiration was buried in the obscurity of the past. It was transferred from the individual men to the sacred books, which were being dealt with not as the Voice of a living God amongst them, but as a mere dead relic of the past, to be worshipped with superstitious reverence and turned into food for intellectual and spiritual pride." Again and again, we know, there have been similar periods in the history of God's people, when they have lost faith in personal inspiration, and have shut themselves up in the bondage of decrees and councils and successions and officialism. Then God has sent some great prophet to preach, and the spell has been broken. The *people* have said, "This is the Voice of God." The scribes and Pharisees have held aloof and looked askance. And sometimes it has been a great social revolution which has justified God and put to shame the pride of men.

But this call to repentance and proclamation of Free Grace was not all that we find in the preaching of John the Baptist. He gave a still more direct testimony to the Spirit. All the evangelists agree that he pointed very clearly to the coming Messiah; but it was more than a prediction that He was coming, it was a solemn authorisation through baptism, and the signs which accompanied it, of the personal Redeemer standing in the midst of the people. "The Spirit descended as a dove and abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy

Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John i. 33, 34). All the other evangelists narrate substantially the same facts—the sign of the Spirit resting on Jesus at His baptism, John's testimony, and the declaration that Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, that is, with a baptism which entirely cleansed and renewed, destroying the old and bringing in the new. It certainly cannot be contended that John preached the Holy Spirit as entirely a *future* bestowment. He could not have meant that. He preached a present Holy Spirit; and the contrast which he proclaimed between Jesus and himself, and all others, was the contrast between a gift of the Spirit bestowed on a man for the work he had to do, and the Spirit abiding in the Lord as His second self, so that the gifts of the Spirit went forth from Christ as from God. He is the Son of God. It is evident that John put himself and his baptism in a subordinate place. It was simply a preparation, an announcement, an introduction. But in what sense? Not as being merely nominal and formal? Surely not. No. But as being partial and incomplete. John's baptism was a Jewish baptism, but it was intermediate between the Old Dispensation and the New. Neither the one nor the other, however, neither John's baptism nor Christian baptism, was preached as itself the *channel* through which Grace was given. The baptism was not repentance; it was the *sign* that repentance was felt and confession made. So the baptism which followed was not itself the communication of the Holy Ghost. It was either the *sign* that the Holy

Ghost was already given, or the *seal* of the promise that it should be given. The remission of sins was not the same as repentance. All that John could do was to point to the Lamb of God and invite the penitent sinner to lay hold of the sacrifice which atoned for guilt, and be cleansed in the blood which by the power of the Holy Ghost actually renewed the nature. Undoubtedly John proclaimed a *covenant*, a new covenant, but he never preached that covenant as identified with a *rite*. The analogy of his own baptism would rather say, "*Believe and be baptized*," as he himself said, "*Repent and be baptized*." Those who entered into the covenant were baptized; but the covenant was between the Spirit of God and the spirit of Man, and no external rite could do more than sign it and seal it. John preached Christ in His three-fold office, as the Lamb of God; as the Spirit of God, *i.e.*, the Giver of the Spirit; and as the Son of God, that is, the King of Israel. He was the Bridegroom, and John was the friend of the Bridegroom, rejoicing because of His Voice. When the Bride, the true Church, was with the Bridegroom, the friend retired, and his joy being fulfilled, his work was done. The Spirit in all His fulness was come, and His gifts would now be poured out as they were promised under the Old Testament. Again we say, then, that the doctrine of the Spirit in the New Testament is essentially the same as that which was believed by the Church of God in every age. The difference was not one of kind but of degree. It was a quantitative, not a qualitative distinction which made the Gospel a *new* dispensation. The facts themselves

were fulfilments of promises. The Saviour was the promised Saviour. The Grace was the promised Grace. The baptism was a new baptism because it was the proclamation of a free, universal Grace, not for the Jews alone, but for the whole world, a kingdom of the Divine Spirit which comprehended all persons and all gifts, and all manifestations, even to the infinite fulness of an everlasting future.

The *Gospel Facts* are full of the Holy Ghost. And when the Lord Jesus preached He took for granted in the minds of His hearers a general assent to the teaching of the Old Testament. But it is by the careful study of the *language* which the Saviour employed, taken in connection with the *facts* of His own person and work, that we learn the Christian doctrine, afterwards more clearly and fully expressed.

We are met at the very opening of the Gospel narrative with the great mystery of the INCARNATION. No language of the Old Testament, not even that which speaks of the Holy Ghost as brooding over creation, prepares us for such a fact, except as it is predicted generally in the prophecies which ascribe Divine greatness and glory to the Messiah. No Old Testament conception of inspiration, though it is certainly set before us as very comprehensive, would suggest the possibility that a "*miraculous conception*" would introduce to the world a new Humanity, which would not only be *inspired*, like the prophet's nature, but "*conceived of the Holy Ghost*," and therefore wholly spiritual. At the same time, we must recognise that, however inspiration lifted a man above his fellows and above himself, there was nothing in the

fact of inspiration inconsistent with the normal life of man. It might therefore be conceivable to one thoroughly familiar with the Old Testament, that the Messiah, when He came, should be absolutely filled with the Holy Ghost, and yet at the same time be a true Man. The two ideas were not irreconcilable to the mind of a devout Hebrew—an earthly *life*, an indwelling *God*. The revelations given to the fathers assuredly taught them that the nature and life of man might be fully possessed by God, for it was prophesied that they should be in the best sense the children of God by God dwelling in them and they in God. But it may be doubted if the profoundest study of the Old Testament would have suggested to any Hebrew mind more than the idea of a close fellowship between the Spirit of God and the spirit of Man. The language employed by God to their prophets made the people familiar with the idea of sanctification from the birth, and even pre-natal consecration, but that would not suggest any supernatural origination of a human life. Jeremiah says (chap. i. 4, 5), “Then the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” Similar language is used of Israel as a people. The meaning is that the man or the nation is divinely chosen and consecrated; but there is no intimation that an entirely new *Fact* shall be introduced into the world, out of the line of ordinary causation. The language employed in the Gospel narrative, however, startles us by

its novelty. Matt. i. 18: "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost*" (εὕρεθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ Πνεύματος ἁγίου). In Luke i. 26-38 we are told very plainly of the visit of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin, of the Annunciation, and when Mary seeks an explanation the miracle is distinctly proclaimed, verse 35: "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee (Revised Version, "that which is to be born shall be called holy") shall be called the Son of God" (καὶ το γεννώμενον ἅγιον κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεοῦ). We must place beside such words the language of the Fourth Gospel, not indeed the language of a narrative, but of the introduction to a narrative: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν) John i. 14. The mystery of the Incarnation cannot be penetrated by any human understanding. We must be contented with the simple statement of the Apostle John, "*The Word was made (or became) flesh.*" But if we approach such a fact from the side of the Holy Spirit, we may ask the question, How could the Holy Spirit of God manifest Himself in all His fulness, without limitation, in absolute perfection, in the person of Man, in an individual human life, unless, in some manner, He acted away from that inheritance of corruption and sin which must be involved in the natural course of human

descent? Incomprehensible as the miraculous conception is, and must be, there is nothing which contradicts human reason in it, for Science itself now emphasises the infinite antecedents of a human birth. If the conception and birth of an individual man imply the infinite evolutionary process which preceded them, it is not for us to say that there is no possibility that conception and birth could be varied in any case. We are so profoundly ignorant of everything, except a few of the facts which come under scientific observation, that we must be contented to say the spirit of Man becomes flesh by Divine appointment, the Spirit of God became flesh for Divine purposes. The Spirit of God wrought in the creation of Man at the first. There is no contradiction in the Gospel fact; the Spirit of God became Man for the creation of a new Humanity. But the Incarnation throws an entirely new light on the doctrine of the Spirit. The person of the Lord Jesus is henceforth identified with the work which the Spirit does. So the Apostle Paul compares the relation of the race to Adam, and the relation of believers to Christ—" *The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit*" (1 Cor. xv. 45). And the Apostle John says of the Word: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power (*ἐξουσίαν*) to become the sons of God" (John i. 12); not to be called or esteemed such in virtue of their character, but to become such in virtue of their new birth. We are carried much higher in our thoughts of the Spirit's work by such language. He is in Christ not a mere influence proceeding from a life or a doctrine,



or even a fellowship; He is a quickening power which creates a man afresh and makes him a son of God. Hence Christians are spoken of as the children of Christ (Heb. ii. 13). They are in a spiritual sense His offspring; they participate in His Divine nature. No such language was employed of any of the ancient prophets, and until it became familiar under the Gospel it would scarcely have been intelligible. In a secondary sense it is used by the Apostle of his converts. But it is the great interpreting fact of the Incarnation which enables us to see that spiritual life may be an entirely new commencement, taking its origin from Him who was a new Humanity, and who came into the world not only to manifest the Spirit of God, but to give His new creating power to fallen creatures. There is no necessity to say more at this point of our inquiry, as this part of the subject must be before us again when we consider our Lord's teaching.

The human development of our Lord's person is but very briefly noticed in the Gospel narrative. We catch glimpses of a spotless life and beautiful character, but until the full manhood was ready to be manifested we are left to conclude from the silence of the record that the spiritual perfection of Jesus was within the limits of ordinary Jewish life. He grew up a devout Man, "*wise*," and "*in favour with God and man*," as He appeared when a child, producing, therefore, the impression on His neighbours of a prophet or one who might become a prophet; though, perhaps, as no prophet had appeared for centuries, the expectation was only vague that one would appear at

that time. We can scarcely suppose that the general feeling in the minds of the people that Messiah might be near really concentrated itself on the person of Jesus. Here and there in the land there were deeply religious people, waiting and praying and hoping for the consolation of Israel. Jesus would be regarded as one of these silent, saintly souls. But there came a time when He must be "shown unto Israel." He was thirty years of age, the age when a public ministry might be commenced without any violation of public sentiment and prejudice. John the Baptist, the forerunner, prepared a large number of the people for the Divine Messenger, not only by promoting in them a suitable attitude of mind and feeling, but by himself breaking the long spell of silence from the time of Malachi; practically suggesting to the nation the possibility that a Prophet of prophets might be at hand. Beyond this, John distinctly announced the Kingdom of Heaven and the advent of Messiah. The sign of the Holy Spirit which was given at the baptism of our Lord is distinctly recorded by all the four evangelists. It is therefore of great importance. Let us put side by side the different forms of the record. First, Matthew says: "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the Heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (chap. iii. 16, 17). Mark says: "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John

in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, He saw the Heavens opened (Revised Version, "rent asunder"), and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him. And there came a voice from Heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (chap. i. 9-11). Luke says: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized (Revised Version, "Now it came to pass when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized"), and praying, the Heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased" (chap. iii. 21, 22). And John says: "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining (abiding) on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (chap. i. 32-34). It is remarkable that all the accounts contain the sign of the dove, and that Luke distinctly notices the "*bodily shape*." Therefore the dove is not a mere emblem introduced to add the idea of peace or purity. It is of the essence of the sign as a sign. And we can scarcely believe that the particular bird would be mentioned if no more was intended than a fluttering, brooding movement as of any bird settling on the head. Moreover, in the synoptic Gospels the voice from Heaven

is recorded. It may be said to be implied in John's account also, for he says that he bare witness "that this is the Son of God," that is, that He was proclaimed the Son of God. Now, it cannot be denied that this account of the descent of the Holy Spirit is entirely different from anything in the Old Testament. We may find, perhaps, some heathen legends which point to the familiarity of the Eastern mind with the symbol of a bird descending and alighting upon a great man; but the sign in this case is so subordinate to the main fact which is distinctly declared, the descent of the Spirit, that we may truly say the two cases are not to be compared. No such sign was ever given to a prophet or any Divine messenger under the Old Dispensation. Both in the instance of Isaiah and that of Jeremiah the lips of the prophet are touched as a sign that the special power of inspired speech was bestowed. Angels came and awakened prophets and touched them, and many signs were given of direct communication from above. But the marked peculiarity of the sign at our Lord's baptism is that it is connected with a distinct declaration that the Spirit of God rested on Him, and that He was the Son of God. We may, therefore, understand the sign as conveying the idea of personal union between the Spirit and the Son. He comes down not as an influence but as a personal presence, bodily as a dove; He abides upon Him; that is, the sign remains a considerable time, until the whole baptismal service was over, and perhaps for a time afterwards. It was as on the Son of God that the Spirit rested on the Saviour. We may, therefore, interpret the

sign as meaning "*the fulness of the Godhead bodily*" in Jesus: the Holy Spirit absolutely and eternally one with Him. He is able "*to baptize with (or in) the Holy Ghost.*" It comes from Him. He can give it not as a man gives it, in so far as it is an influence flowing from His words and works, but as a direct personal communication. This great fact stands at the threshold of the Gospel. The Kingdom of Heaven came when the King was revealed. His kingly nature and authority was not only in His wisdom and personal character, but in His being so possessed of the Spirit of God that He could bring all spirits into subjection to His Spirit, and lift up the nature of every man into everlasting fellowship with God. Surely there is a great difference between such a representation of Christ's anointing and any other. The idea of inspiration does not seem to fill up such a sign. If Jesus had preached and wrought miracles and then died, as any Old Testament prophet might have been inspired to fulfil a mission to his age, we should have felt, even if the grandest sayings and the most wonderful miracles had been recorded of Him, that the baptism promised more than was afterwards fulfilled. We have, then, in this leading fact a new revelation of the Spirit. He has fully come into our Humanity. He has come to take up His abode in Man. He has come to be identified with Him who is emphatically Friend, Brother, Advocate, Comforter, Helper, Saviour. The apostles and evangelists regarded the whole history of Jesus as the ministry of the Spirit. The Spirit carried on His work as Saviour when He Himself ascended to Heaven. The mission of the Comforter

was the mission of Christ. The salvation of Man is essentially a spiritual salvation. Hence the baptism which Jesus has come to minister is the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire. The blessed Trinity was revealed in the initial rite of the Christian Dispensation, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into whose triune name the disciple was baptized. Christ's own baptism was a point of union of the three Divine Persons. The Spirit came upon the Son, and the Father declared Himself well pleased. The white dove, with outstretched wings, descending on the head of Jesus betokened the apotheosis of Humanity.

The next fact in the Saviour's history after the Baptism was His Temptation in the Wilderness, and this in the Gospel narrative is distinctly connected with the fulness of the Spirit. Matthew says: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil," (chap. iv. 1). Mark says: "And immediately the Spirit driveth (*ἐκβαλλει*) Him into the wilderness" (chap. i. 12). Luke is even more explicit: "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness" (chap. iv. 1). There is no distinct reference in the Fourth Gospel to the Temptation; but when John the Baptist saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (chap. i. 29), he went on to speak of our Lord's baptism as having taken place some time before. We can therefore easily suppose that between the baptism and the public proclamation of the Lord as the Lamb of God forty days had intervened. When John saw Jesus coming to him, he saw Him

coming as a victor from the wilderness of His temptation. Now, the operation of the Spirit, to which the evangelists ascribe our Lord's temporary absence from men in the solitude of the wilderness, in two instances called a "leading" or "taking," but in the other a "*driving*" or "*thrusting forth*," and which is also attributed to the fulness of the Spirit's presence and action, may be compared with other instances in the Scriptures, and regarded as at least analogous to the ecstasy or afflatus of the prophet. The human nature of our Lord was subject to the ordinary conditions of development. He grew in wisdom and in stature. His consciousness, as Man, must be cognisant of earthly circumstances and limitations. The Spirit of God taking full possession of His mind and will would produce some degree of excitement. But the excitement of a powerful mind is a very different thing from the excitement of a weak nature. There was no disorder, no overbalancing of the faculties, no loss of self-control, nothing like mania or frenzy, but simply the whole current of thought and feeling and will directed towards the fulfilment of the Divine purpose which the Spirit of God revealed to the consciousness of Jesus at this point of His history with all the fulness of the Divine Wisdom and Love. Jesus felt that He was the Son of God to glorify God, and be well-pleasing to Him in His appointed work as Saviour. The Divine purpose filling His nature was an impulse to withdraw Himself into the wilderness for solitary thought and prayer and preparation. Hence the form of the Temptation was, "*If Thou be the Son of God.*" It was a distinct challenge by the Evil Spirit to renounce the

claim which conscious fulness of the Spirit of God carried with it. One who knows that he is filled with the Spirit has no need to resort to anything outside the Word of God; he calmly rests upon the promises. Tempting God by presumptuous action, worshipping Satan by receiving power by means of Satanic agencies and methods; all such sins are the fruits of man's lack of the Spirit of God. He that was absolutely full of the Spirit could not commit them. The temptation failed because it came against One who not only claimed to be but was the Son of God. There must be a great deal in such a fact as the Lord's temptation in the wilderness, which no thought of ours can penetrate, but as far as the operation of the Spirit is revealed to us in the fact, we find it confirmed by the experience of all spiritual men. Conscious possession of the Spirit is accompanied with temptation. The sense of a great mission does afford Satan an opportunity to try us. Pride, presumption, self-assertion, impatience, worship of the world for the sake of power and speedy success, are sins never far off from those who aim at great things and think great thoughts and feel themselves appointed to be leaders and reformers of the world. And yet how true it is, the more like Christ His servants are, the more His Spirit possesses them, the safer they are! The perfection of the Saviour does not take Him out of the sphere of human sympathy and fellowship. Even in the wilderness He is tempted in all points like as we are, and His victory, while it was due to the Divine fulness of His power, was yet the same kind of victory which every



child of God can obtain over Satan by the presence and influence of the Holy Ghost. The Temptation stands between the Baptism and the commencement of the Saviour's public ministry. Hence the language of the Third Gospel: "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all" (Luke iv. 14, 15). Our Lord did not need any actual defeat of Satan in order to convince Himself that He was the Son of God. And yet we may believe that the power of the Spirit was carrying Him to His public work with a greater outflow of His human faculties than if He had not passed through that mysterious conflict and gained the victory. A true minister of Christ does not need the fruits of his ministry in the conversion of souls to prove to him that he is called to be a messenger of God; the inward witness of the Spirit assures him that he is so called; but the joy of achievement is a great stimulus, the gathering in of the sheaves is a great uplifting influence, kindling enthusiasm and multiplying power. It was very soon after the commencement of His public ministry, with the scene in the wilderness only a few days in the background, that the Lord, opening the Book of the Prophet Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth, applied to Himself with inspired boldness, in that familiar place of His childhood, where the Prophet being in his own country would not be accepted and would be without honour, the grand prediction of the spiritual Kingdom and the spiritual King: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath

anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." There was no excitement, no passion, in the Lord's sermon at Nazareth, but there was evidently a supernatural confidence, and, at the same time, a Divine tenderness and love in his speech and manner. "The eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. . . . And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (Luke iv. 20, 22). Again we see that the power of the Spirit, like the power of the Creator, is at the same time Wisdom and Love. It is not such a power as Satan tempted Jesus to put forth—vain, selfish, presumptuous, worldly—but the power which preaches to the poor, heals the broken-hearted, opens the prison-houses, gives eyes to the blind, and proclaims universal liberty and acceptance. There is a wonderful revelation of the nature and work of the Spirit of God in these opening facts of the Saviour's public life, His baptism, His temptation, and His preaching at Nazareth.

The ministry of our Lord may be regarded from two points of view, as a ministry of power and as a ministry of Divine Truth. In both respects it was a ministry in which the fulness of the Spirit was manifested. The miracles which began to be wrought almost as soon as Jesus declared Himself and drew disciples to His side, as we see from the account given us in the Fourth Gospel of the turning of the water into wine, which is called "*the*

*beginning of miracles,"* were undoubtedly manifestations of the Spirit. May we not find something like an analogy to the working of a physical miracle, in the case of a Divine Teacher, in the remarkable effects often produced on the fleshly nature by a powerful spiritual impulse? In the forty days spent by Jesus in the wilderness we are told that He took no food and afterwards hungered. Similar instances of the power, of the spirit over the body are seen in Moses and Elijah, and to a less degree are not uncommon amongst religious people. We are so little acquainted with the nature of disease, that it is impossible to say that such diseases as our Saviour healed might not be cured rapidly by a sudden stimulus imparted to the spirit. Even in the most mysterious case of all, that of raising the dead, it is not for us to say that life is not more spiritual than material. We cannot know what death is, as the secret of life is impenetrable. It may be that our Saviour's miracles were not either suspensions of natural laws, or the calling in of unknown agencies, or arbitrary exercises of omnipotent power, but acts in the spiritual world which, when we know that world better than we ever can know it on earth, will not appear to us mysterious at all. But in the presence of such facts all we can say is, they were works wrought by God in Christ through the Spirit. Therefore they teach us that the Spirit of God does act upon the external material world. And this is what the Apostle Paul affirms when he says that our bodies are "the temples of the Holy Ghost." The power of the Saviour over the spirits of men was very wonderful.

Both in the case of those who in some measure were waiting for spiritual influences and ready to receive them, as the first disciples, and in the marvellous effects produced on the multitudes and on those who were enemies and came to apprehend Him, we see that Jesus shed forth from Himself a supernatural influence over the mind and heart. But the one most instructive fact in the record of the Saviour's works is the power which He exercised over demons and unclean spirits. Evidently the Pharisees and most bitter of the Lord's opponents were stumbled by this fact. They were betrayed by their inveterate prejudice into the blasphemous folly of ascribing that power to an alliance with the evil spirits themselves. So utterly irrational and superficial was their theology, that they could suppose the Prince of Darkness deceiving the people by submitting himself to a sham defeat in order to take them captive. But although Satan may transform himself into an angel of light to produce a temporary effect, we cannot conceive that any people would be more inclined to come under bad influences by seeing bad spirits defeated and cast out. If Jesus was overthrowing Satan, He must have first entered the strong man's house and bound the strong man. Then He would spoil his house. Our Lord has told us that these miracles were the result of a great change in the spiritual world, and it may be that the essential part of that change was wrought in the forty days of the Lord's temptation: "*I saw Satan as lightning fall from Heaven.*" Does not that mean that He Himself cast Satan forth and broke his power? If so, then our Lord's possession

of the Holy Spirit was His rising to the supreme place in the world of spiritual beings. All spirits are subject unto Him. This is the truth which is presented to us very clearly and decidedly by the language of the Apostle Paul in several places. And it throws much light on the whole doctrine of the Spirit in the Scriptures. Spiritual influences proceed from spiritual beings. Much of the work of God's Spirit in the lives of His people may be analogous to the work which Jesus did in casting out the evil spirits from those who were possessed. Our sins are closely connected with persons and personal agencies. The cleansing of our thoughts and the lifting up of our characters may be greatly effected through the casting out of the sphere of our life of spirits which have been acting upon us for evil. The fellowship of saints is a mighty spiritual power. Is there not over against it the companionship of devils? Demoniical possession in its ancient form may be extinct. We cannot certainly say that it is. However we explain the facts of the present world as we see them, it is a great and consoling truth which the Gospel puts before us—Jesus Christ by the Spirit of God controls all personal agencies, whether they be above the earth, or on the earth, or under the earth. Some of our scientific men have thought it an absurdity to represent devils as entering into swine and driving them into the deep. But the irrational animals are undoubtedly possessed of a nervous system which can be acted upon by terror and supernatural appearances. Such a miracle seems to point to the fact that evil spirits may have a larger sphere of action than the spirits of men. Through

animals and through material phenomena generally they may be able to produce effects in the world which serve their evil purposes. Assuredly the presence of the Spirit of God in man extends much further in its influence than to the thoughts and feelings of the soul. There is a new creation, not only in the innermost man, but in his whole existence. The Spirit of God brooded over the original chaos and changed it into cosmos. His work is still the same, both in individuals and in society.

The ministry of our Saviour was also a ministry of Divine teaching. We must now, therefore, put together briefly the most essential constituents of the doctrine of the Spirit as it appears expressed in the words of our Lord's discourses and sayings. This is so large a subject that much must be left to be supplied by the reader. The aim of this rapid review is rather to guide the mind in the study of the Gospels than to gather together the whole of their teaching, which is simply inexhaustible in its suggestiveness, and capable of being placed in endless new relations to religious thought and experience. The chief part of our Lord's teaching on the subject of the Spirit is found in the Fourth Gospel. There are exceedingly few direct references to it in the Synoptics. The Sermon on the Mount may be regarded as a summary of the Lord's discourses so far as they were proclamations of the Law of His Kingdom. The parables which are given subsequently, and which are gathered together by Matthew in the thirteenth chapter as examples of the Lord's teaching, contain the leading principles of the Kingdom of Grace. Spirituality is implied in all that

the Saviour says about His mission to the world. He has not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets. His mission is to establish a kingdom in the heart, a spiritual kingdom which will manifest itself in the fulfilment of the Law. Although nothing is introduced into the Sermon on the Mount which can be said to be a positive statement on the subject of the Spirit, His work is pre-supposed throughout. We must not lose sight of the fact that the Saviour's audiences were quite familiar with Old Testament teaching, which, as we have seen, embraced the leading fundamental truths as to inspiration and the work of the Spirit in writing the Law of God on the heart. When the Lord gave His commission to His twelve apostles, He probably spoke to them more distinctly about the spiritual gifts with which they were endowed. "*It is not ye that speak,*" He said to them, "*but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you*" (Matt. x. 20 ; Mark xiii. 11 ; Luke xii. 12, cf. xxi. 15, where Jesus Himself claims the power of the Spirit). When Simon Peter openly, and as the representative apostle, declared solemnly his faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God, Jesus pronounced his confession to be the work of the Spirit: "*Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven*" (Matt. xvi. 17). The Spirit is the gift of God, and the disciples are encouraged to pray for the gift as freely as they would pray for any of the good gifts of their Heavenly Father. "*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιον) to*

*them that ask Him?*" (Luke xi. 13). The personality of the Spirit is involved in the very distinct denunciation of blasphemy against Him. We can scarcely admit that such a word as blasphemy would be used if the Holy Spirit were not regarded as a person, especially as the Lord sets side by side together blasphemy against Himself as the Son of Man and blasphemy against the Spirit: the one shall be forgiven, the other shall not (*cf* Matt. xii. 32; Mark iii. 29; Luke xii. 10). Matthew applies to the Saviour the words of Isaiah, "I will put My Spirit upon Him" (chap. xii. 18); and when the Lord rebuked the Pharisees for their blasphemous ascription of His works to diabolical agency, He claimed to be Himself the source of the power by which the evil spirits were cast out. He was one with the Divine Spirit. "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you" (Matt. xii. 28). It must be remembered that the synoptical Gospels were written as narratives. Their main object was to preserve for the infant Church of Christ the principal facts of the Saviour's history and the leading commandments of His new Law. The conspicuous aim of the writers is to exalt Jesus, not to vindicate Christian doctrine. It is "*the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God*" which they write, and as narrators of facts and sayings which set forth who Jesus was and what He did, while they did not ignore the work of the Holy Spirit, we can understand that they did not feel themselves called to put it prominently forward. Perhaps this would be partly accounted for by the fact that the work and signs of the Spirit were very



abundant at the time the Synoptics were written, that is, about thirty years after Christ's ascension. The Day of Pentecost was fresh in the remembrance of the Church. In the presence of such a spiritual kingdom they would not feel the necessity for putting on record the teaching of our Lord on the subject. But at the close of the first century, when the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were beginning to lessen in number and the deeper and more regular work of the Kingdom had to be depended on, then it was put into the heart of the beloved disciple, whose life was prolonged much after the decease of the other apostles, to give to the world fully the doctrine of the Divine Spirit as it was taught in the Saviour's discourses with His chosen followers.

The testimony of the Apostle John to the spiritual nature of the Saviour's Kingdom is very distinct and emphatic, and it is the more important because, as he tells us in his first epistle, "*Antichrist was already in the world.*" The Anti-christian opposition to the Kingdom of the Saviour was chiefly an undue exaltation of the material as against the spiritual. Hence the Apostle John puts very prominently forward in his Gospel the teaching of the Saviour on the subject of entrance into the Kingdom of God and fellowship with Himself in the Kingdom; and as the ministry of the Church soon became the sphere of the most Anti-christian errors and corrupt claims put forth by men in the name of Christ, the doctrine of a spiritual ministry is fully declared in the farewell discourses of the Lord with His apostles. No one can deny that Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the

apostolic ministry are in the very forefront of the Apostle's thoughts as he puts his Gospel together. It was very natural that it should be so at the close of the first century with one exercising his ministry in Ephesus and its neighbourhood, and regarding himself as the last apostolic representative of Christ in the world. The discourse of our Saviour with Nicodemus is not upon baptism, but it is upon entrance into the Kingdom of God. Nicodemus was a typical representative of externalism. Like all the leading religious men of his time, he thought of the Kingdom of God as an external organisation, into which a person might be admitted by his assent to terms or by his native rights, just as the member of a nation is either born into it or admitted into it by naturalisation, which is the act of others on his behalf. The fact that there is a Kingdom of the Spirit was very obscure in Nicodemus's mind, though as a ruler, and therefore teacher, in Israel, he ought to have learned it from the Old Testament. Into a spiritual kingdom we cannot enter by any other way than by a spiritual work—" *That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit* " (chap. iii. 6). There is no particular stress laid by our Lord on the birth as distinguished from the real commencement of life. He intends to mark the two orders of life, fleshly life and spiritual life. Hence, when He introduces the water with an evident allusion to baptism, it cannot be that the water is identified with the Spirit, but that they are associated together, because the spiritual life was testified through baptism. If there were any power in the water

(or the baptism), surely it would have been put in the first place in the discourse, whereas the word *ἀνωθεν* (from above, or again) is the first term applied to the new birth, and after the reference to the water it is entirely dropped out of view. The life which is born is spiritual, and its essence is faith in the Son of God. The special reason why our Saviour introduced the mention of water or baptism was to remove any difficulty from the mind of Nicodemus by His use of the words "*born again*." Naturally, an old man, if he did not recognise that Jesus was speaking of the hidden work of the Spirit of God in the heart, would be perplexed by the idea of a new birth. And the Lord reminded him that coming out of the water might be so denominated. But the life which came out of the water was not given by the water in any sense; the person came forth cleansed and renewed, but the cleansing and renewing of the body set forth and symbolised and sealed the spiritual work which made the life, and therefore preceded the birth. There was nothing really new in our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus except the distinct proclamation of the spiritual regeneration as the law of entrance into the Kingdom of God, and the exposition which followed, in which He Himself is lifted up as the object of faith. The doctrine of the Spirit is thus made Christian by a clear development, from the general truths of the Old Testament to the special application of those truths in the person and work of the Saviour. In the latter portion of the third chapter the testimony of the Baptist to Christ emphasises the **freedom** and fulness of spiritual

gifts as the mark of the new epoch. "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure (*ἐκ μέτρου*) unto Him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (chap. iii. 34-36). Whether we regard these words as uttered by John the Baptist, or as an addition to his testimony by John the Apostle, is of little consequence. The meaning evidently is, that our Saviour gives the Spirit freely and fully, because He possesses it Himself "*without measure*," that is, not under the limitations of the Old Dispensation, but with the universality of Gospel grace. It is the same great fact which was before the mind of the Saviour in His conversation with the woman of Samaria. To her mind grace was limited by the external conditions of worship. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Undoubtedly under the Old Testament such a limitation of the Spirit of God was taught. Not that God withheld His Spirit, but that He wrought by means and agencies which, as the world then was, must be restraints. A Jew *might* see almost as much truth in the dim light of his sacrificial system as the Christian under the Gospel. But the dim light made it difficult to see it, and those who did not see much more than the shadowy forms and general character of the things to come were not condemned for unbelief. But our Lord declares that there is a great change now that

the great Light has come. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 21-24). This is a saying of our Lord's which, taken in connection with the whole occurrence and conversation related in the chapter, is full of significance. It was a half-heathen woman whom He invited to the Water of Life, and she herself, having by grace at once partaken of the Divine fulness of the Gospel through faith, became a messenger to her neighbours, and through them to Samaria at large. Thus the freedom of the Spirit was both taught and illustrated. God is declared to be Spirit, or the Spirit. The Gospel rests upon belief in a spiritual God. If God is Spirit, then Spirit and Truth are the elements in which He is worshipped. Our Saviour threw no disparagement upon sacred places or upon religious services by such words. But He clearly taught that the essence of their sacredness consisted not in any external adjustment of circumstances, or in any separation or distinction from other places, but in the presence and operation of the Spirit of God. Truth is a spiritual reality. The worshipper who disregards Truth dishonours God. It is not the Spirit without the Truth in which we worship God, nor is it the Truth with-

out the Spirit. He takes no delight in mere waves of feeling passing over the soul, nor will He accept the acknowledgment of a creed, or the intellectual assent to Truth in the abstract, without spiritual life. He is worshipped as a Spirit by spirits, that is, by a living communion, for a Spirit can only worship Spirit by intelligent and loving intercourse. How can we worship God without Truth? Hence the Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth, and His work is to enlighten, to remove the darkness of ignorance and corruption, to reveal God to our spirits, and to lead us into fellowship with God. Such teaching swept away a very great deal which had grown up under the protection of religion, but which, because of men's infirmities and sins, hid God from them and stood in the way of the world's salvation. Jews had degraded both their Temple and their Scriptures into unspiritual things. There was no recognition of Divine Grace either amongst Jews or Gentiles. The Spirit of God was supposed to endow certain privileged persons and dwell in certain consecrated places. The world was to be blessed by being brought to acknowledge the supremacy of Jerusalem. Heathen wise men said the highest minds would see for all the rest, and if the people could not be taught the wisdom of the great thinkers and seers, they must be left to perish. But Jesus said, "The hour is come to proclaim universal grace. My mission is to invite all men to Me, because all the Spirit is Mine, and I give it freely without money and without price. The Father seeks only for His children. If we know the gift of God, we shall ask of Him that gives it, and it shall be

in us a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

Our Lord's discourses with "*the Jews*," i.e., with those who opposed His claims, are given to us in summary in the fifth chapter of John's Gospel. There is no distinct mention in our Saviour's words of the Spirit, but He speaks of Himself as able to quicken the dead to life. "The Son quickeneth whom He will." And again, "For as the Father hath life in Himself: so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." The life spoken of in these words cannot be His own personal life, but the life of the Spirit of God, given "without measure" unto Him. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "To have life in Himself" must mean to have in Himself the power to bestow life or to quicken, to be the source of life. The lowest animal has life in itself in a secondary sense, that is, holds life as a tenure. But God alone has life as its originator. The first man was only in a subordinate sense the beginning of life. He might be the first of a race, but that race was itself a link in the series of creation. So in the sixth chapter our Saviour declares Himself to be one with the Father in giving and maintaining life in the believer, whom by His power He will raise up at the last day. The discourse which was preached in Capernaum after the miracles of the feeding of the multitude and walking on the sea was manifestly intended to prepare those who heard it, and the world which should read it, for the spiritual use of the rite afterwards instituted when Jesus said, "This is My body; this is My blood." The whole rests upon the true doctrine of the

Spirit. All the sacramental errors which have corrupted the Church and obscured the Gospel have proceeded from the lack of right belief on the subject of the work of the Spirit of God. The Lord seems to remind us purposely of the close connection between the teaching of the Old Testament and that of the New when He quotes from the prophets the promise of inspired guidance for all the children of God. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me" (chap. vi. 45). And again, in the sixty-third verse, in answering the perplexity of His disciples, who complained that "it was an hard saying; who can hear it?"—*i.e.*, who can accept both mentally and practically such a commandment to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man?—our Lord emphatically repeated the doctrine of a spiritual life, as though He would say, "I give the Holy Spirit: whosoever receiving that gift is spiritually one with Me, partakes of Me in the fullest sense; and this will be clear to you when the Resurrection and Ascension make it clear." *"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life."* Our Lord does not mean merely discourses, by *"the words"* which He has spoken (τὰ ῥήματα). They are the prescribed things or commandments. They are Spirit, as being only acceptable to God when the Spirit teaches them and gives us power to fulfil them. They are life because they are Spirit. The disciples would find such sayings hard only so long as they thought of them from the point of view of unspiritual men. When they



were full of the Holy Ghost they would never be stumbled by such language as the Saviour used of eating His flesh and drinking His blood. All extreme sacramentarianism is a sign of the decay of spiritual life. Those who make much of external rites make little of the work of God in the heart. "There are some of you," Jesus said, "that believe not." Faith is not guaranteed by the external position we hold. It may be the position nearest to the Head, but it may be position only. "*No man can come to Jesus, except it be given him of the Father.*"

Another very important declaration on the subject of the Spirit is found in the seventh chapter. It was made at the Feast of Tabernacles in the presence of embittered enemies and officers sent to take Him. The waters drawn from the brook Siloam at that feast furnished our Lord with a text. He discoursed on the spiritual life as flowing forth directly from Himself: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Westcott says ("Gospel of John," p. 123): "The reference is not to any one isolated passage, but to the general tenor of such passages as Isa. lviii. 11 and Zech. xiv. 8, taken in connection with the original image" (Exod. xvii. 6; Num. xx. 11). The fact that no precise quotation is made is itself significant. The whole doctrine of the Spirit in the Old Testament, and especially in the prophets, was in the mind of the Saviour at the time. The people of God were to become "*wells of salvation*" to the world. Such promises as we find in Joel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah must have prepared

the minds of devout readers of the Old Testament for the outpouring of the Spirit upon believers, by which they would become themselves fountains or rivers of blessing to the heathen. The parenthesis of explanation which follows would very naturally be added by the Apostle John, writing as he was at the end of the first century, to explain the fact that Jesus did not speak more explicitly concerning the gifts of the Spirit. He could not make it plainer at that time because as yet the Holy Spirit was not, as He afterwards was, manifestly poured out: "But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive (*οὗ ἔμελλον λαμβανειν*). For the Holy Ghost was not yet given (*οὐπω γαρ ἦν Πνεῦμα ἁγιον*), because that Jesus was not yet glorified." The reference, therefore, is not to saving faith, which must always be the work of the Spirit, but to those endowments by which believers should be made "rivers of living water." Such endowments were not at that time poured out. They came on the Day of Pentecost. Here, then, we have a very distinct enunciation by our Lord of an important doctrine in respect to the Spirit. His operation is twofold, that which quickens to new life and that which sends forth the new life on the world. It is a very cardinal doctrine. Confusion between these two operations of the Spirit has led many into error with regard to the Day of Pentecost. It has been and is maintained by some that the Day of Pentecost dates the commencement of the Church of Christ. It is only by a confusion between the commencement of spiritual life and the commencement of

spiritual gifts that such a view can be supported. We cannot discuss it at this point; it will come more properly into the review of the teaching of the Acts of the Apostles. But plainly, if the Holy Ghost was received by believers, it must have been not to believe, but to minister to others. Therefore there must have been a participation of the Spirit *before* the Day of Pentecost; and if there was the work of the Spirit, there was a Church, for the Church is the congregation of those who believe. No doubt the Day of Pentecost inaugurated a fresh and unprecedented manifestation of the Divine Kingdom. But there is no sanction, either in the language of the Acts or of the Saviour Himself before His Ascension, for the view that the Church of Christ was not in existence before that time.

There is no other passage previous to the farewell discourses directly bearing on the doctrine of the Spirit, but in the tenth chapter, when our Lord is vindicating Himself from the charge of blasphemy because He said, "I am the Son of God," He refers to His sanctification as giving Him the claim to such a title: "If He called them gods unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" The sanctification of the Son is here placed side by side with the sanctification of those to whom the Word of God came, and our Saviour argues from the less to the greater. As uttering the Word of God men were called gods—that is, representatives of God—He who

was "sanctified and sent into the world" was more than a recipient of the Word of God. He could be called the Son of God without blasphemy, because the Holy Spirit was His as in no other instance. The claim is that He came as a sanctified One "*into the world*;" therefore His sanctification is identical with His nature. He brings it with Him from Heaven. Hence the Saviour could say, "*The Father is in Me, and I in Him.*" Sanctification taken by itself would not necessarily convey all that the Saviour claimed. But the distinct reference to Eternity at once separates the sanctification in our Lord's case from that of any merely earthly servant ("whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world"). The covenant-relation implied in the commission given to the "theocratic judges" assumes, as Canon Westcott has remarked, the possibility of a vital union between God and man. "Judaism was not a system of limited monotheism, but a theism always tending to theanthropism, to a real union of God and man. It was, therefore, enough to show, in answer to the accusation of the Jews, that there lay already in the Law the germ of the truth which Christ announced, the union of God and man" (p. 160). Close upon that suggestive answer to the Pharisees, St. John has placed the stupendous miracle, the raising of Lazarus from the tomb. In connection with that work, which manifested the Saviour's quickening power, stand the stirring and exalted words in which Jesus claims to be the life of every believer, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever

liveth and believeth in Me (that is, lives the life of faith in Me), shall never die " (John xi. 25, 26). When the Greeks came to see Jesus, and Andrew and Philip told Him, He predicted the glory which was coming upon Him. Even the enemies exclaimed, "Behold, the world is gone after Him." He Himself declared that, now that He was about to be offered up for the glory of God's name, the judgment of this world was at hand, the prince of this world is judged. "*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.*" The power thus claimed is certainly the power of the Holy Ghost in all its fulness. The contrast is with the power of this world and of the prince of this world. That power is the power of a lost spirit over the spirits of men. Christ's power is that of the Spirit of God over all men, and no man is beyond the reach of that power, no work is too great for the Spirit of God to do. It is not a mere geographical universality which Jesus ascribes to His power. Nor are the words to be taken in the sense of a bald literalism, as they are by the Universalist, who understands them to predict the actual salvation of all intelligent beings. The power is described in its nature and in its extent as revealing its nature; all shall feel it and recognise it, whether it accomplishes their salvation or not (*παντας ἐλκύσω προς ἑμουντον*). All the Universalist can conclude from such words is the universal applicability of the power. The facts of human destiny would not be left to be described in words of so much breadth if they were intended to be positively predicted.

There remains now to be considered in this review of the Gospels the special and direct teaching which our Lord gave to His twelve apostles on the mission of the Holy Ghost as the Comforter, concluding with His solemn communication to the eleven faithful ones of the endowment with its attendant authority. As this is a part of the subject which is of immeasurable importance, it will be the most fitting method of treating it to put together first the exact words of the Saviour in the order in which they were uttered, and then briefly state the doctrine which they seem to set forth.

“If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter (*παρακλητον*), that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not (for it beholdeth Him not), neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you” (chap. xiv. 15-17). “These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is (ever) the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you” (chap. xiv. 25, 26). “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me” (chap. xv. 26). “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you. And He, when He do come,

will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the Truth; for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall know, these shall He speak: and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He taketh of Mine, and shall declare it unto you" (chap. xvi. 7-15). "Sanctify them through Thy Truth. Thy Word is Truth." "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the Truth" (chap. xvii. 17-19). "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (chap. xx. 21-23).

We can scarcely say of these words that they contain much that has not been revealed in other places in the Scripture. It is rather as a development of Divine teaching than as new revelation that we should regard them. They confirm some of the leading doctrines which, as we

have seen, are to be found more or less distinctly even in the Old Testament.

I. The titles which are employed by our Lord and applied to the Spirit leave no doubt on the subject of Personality—"The Comforter" (ὁ παράκλητος), "The Spirit of Truth" (το Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας), while the use of the active verb and of the masculine pronoun in apposition to the word Spirit, which is neuter, makes it indisputably certain that our Lord intended us to conceive of the Spirit as a person. The word ἐκεῖνος could not be employed of a mere influence, nor could it represent a mere abstract idea of spiritual agencies. The same masculine pronoun is found in all the three places where the action of the Spirit is referred to (chaps. xiv. 26, xv. 26, xvi. 8). The title *Paraclete*, which has been habitually rendered "*Comforter*" through many ages, has the original sense of *advocate or pleader*, but seems to be used by the Lord in the general sense of *Helper*, i.e., one called to our side to take up our cause and maintain it on our behalf. The idea in John xiv. 26 probably is, that when the Saviour leaves His disciples the Spirit comes to their help. The name is introduced immediately after the reference to absence ("*being yet present with you*") ; hence the Paraclete is sent by the Father *in the name* of Jesus, i.e., as representing Jesus. He pleads Christ's cause with and for the believer. He continues the Saviour's work on earth, teaching, healing, comforting, saving. Jesus Himself is called a *Paraclete* in 1 John ii. 1, and in that case His advocacy is with the Father on behalf of sinners. The title "*Spirit of Truth*" evidently



gathers into a name the whole of what both the Old Testament and our Lord Himself teach on the subject of Inspiration. The Truth which is found in the Scriptures is the Truth referred to. The Spirit gave the truth to the fathers and the prophets; the apostles are promised that they shall be taught, led, guided, shown things to come, shown the things of Christ, and under special inspiration, breathed into them by the Lord Himself, they should remit or retain sins, that is, should declare with authority the doctrine of forgiveness. The titles are explained and illustrated by the subsequent facts of Christian history. It is only necessary, therefore, at this point to observe that as titles they must be used of a person.

2. The next particular noticeable in the Saviour's words is the very distinct affirmation of a special advent of the Spirit. "*The Father will send Him.*" "When He is come whom I will send unto you from the Father." "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come," &c. "When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come." Now, when we bear in mind that these words were addressed to apostles, to those who already had the Spirit, in so far as they believed and served Him, we see that they can only be explained of an advent of the Spirit for the purpose of the life-work of the apostles. The coming of the Spirit must mean the special outpouring of His gifts. Jesus referred to a particular epoch when He bade the disciples tarry in Jerusalem until a certain time. We must, therefore, distinguish between two kinds of advent of the Spirit. He comes into every soul when He

works, and His work under the Old Testament was as truly an incoming of the Spirit as on the Day of Pentecost. But we can gather from the whole teaching of the New Testament, in connection with those parting words of Jesus to the apostles, that the completion of the Saviour's work opened the way for a manifestation of the Spirit, which might be called emphatically "*His Advent.*" We may perhaps place beside this fact, the mission of the Comforter, the somewhat analogous fact, the Incarnation. The Son of God was in the world from the beginning, and the Incarnation was anticipated by many manifestations of the Divine presence which pointed on to it. But when "the Word was made flesh," there was an advent of the Redeemer which we rightly call "*The Advent.*" So the Spirit of God manifested His presence and operations all through the ages; but there was a time, a specific point in the dispensation of God, when the Spirit of God "*came,*" as the result of the work accomplished, when the Redeemer could say, "*It is finished,*" and sit down at the right hand of God. The message of salvation itself was not fully prepared to be published in the world until after the Ascension. The Divine *facts* had to be built up into the perfect structure, in which the Spirit of God could henceforth dwell as the consecrated Temple of the Divine Presence and Glory. When Jesus could say, "*All things are now ready,*" then the Spirit came in His plenary gifts and rested on the Church.

3. Our Lord, again, emphasises in His words, the *indwelling and abiding* of the Spirit. The Comforter is

given, "*that He may abide with you for ever*" (ἵνα μένη μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). "*Ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*" (παρ' ὑμῶν μένει, καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσται). The Apostle John in his First Epistle shows us that he fully recognised such words as referring not to the apostles alone, but to all believers—who "had an unction from the Holy One and knew all things." It was an "*anointing which abideth in them*" (1 John ii. 20, 27). Now, while no doubt our Lord intended His apostles to understand that they would be gifted with special gifts of the Spirit, and that such gifts would not be simply for a time, but through their whole ministry, we cannot limit the application of His words to the twelve or to the apostolic age. He would not have used the term "*for ever*" had He looked only to a temporary supply of power. The Church of Christ is promised an abiding presence of the Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Ghost is not individual alone, it is also an indwelling in the body of Christ. Hence the Lord immediately separates such operation of the Spirit from that which the world sees and knows. "*The world cannot receive Him.*" The reception referred to must be the special reception whereby in the case of believers He takes up His abode in them both individually and in fellowship. The world can see the *signs* of the Spirit, the world can receive, into the *intellect* and by means of *external* acknowledgment, the doctrine of the Spirit; but the world cannot take into its *nature* and *constitution* the indwelling presence and operation of the Spirit. The spiritual life is incapable of amalgamation with the world.

Human society as it is in the world is not a temple of the Holy Ghost. Nor can it ever become so except by changes which shall "*overcome the world.*" The Christian society, on the other hand, though very far from ideally perfect, very far from realising what the Lord Jesus Christ intended it to be, does yet contain within itself principles and actual forms of life to which the Spirit of God can attach itself. When our Lord scourged the defilers out of the Temple He said, "Make not My Father's house a house of merchandise;" "it shall be called a House of Prayer for all nations." The defilement did not destroy the idea of the Temple, though it might bury it in human corruption. So the Church of Christ, which is His body, even when it is defiled is still the House of God, the Temple of the Holy Ghost. Assuredly the Lord did not intend His apostles to identify the Temple itself with the order or services connected with it. They might change from time to time, but the essential fact was the Temple itself. The Spirit of God does not abide in a priesthood, or a rite, or a form of government. The Spirit of God "*dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*" There is no possibility that *Spirit* should dwell in anything but *spirit*. The persons receive Him, the persons retain His presence. In the sight of God there is no respect of persons. One Spirit dwelleth in all alike. The gifts themselves are distributed freely, according to the Grace of God, who "giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not." It is true, as we shall see when we review the teaching of the Acts and Epistles, that there are differences both of gifts and of ministra-

tions, but there is no such thing as a distinction of rank or caste in the Temple of God. There are no officers in the Divine administration who can claim a special inspiration, as abiding in them or attached to their position. All are priests; all are kings; all are inspired; the gifts, whatever they are, are poured into a common treasury. When Jesus addressed His apostles He addressed them as representatives of His people. The words apply universally to the humblest believers down to the end of time: "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." The "*ἐντολαί*" and the "*λογοί*," on the keeping of which the Lord made His presence depend, could not mean the ordinances of ecclesiastics, the decrees of councils, and the temporary forms of church administration. They were the spiritual commandments and the Divine truths, which form the substance of the Gospel, and which are preached through all the world to every creature.

4. The work of the Spirit is not fully described by the Lord, but the few words which He employs on the subject are capable of being expanded by means of the commentary supplied in the history of the early Church. The word "*teaching*" is a very comprehensive word: "*He shall teach you all things*" (*διδάξει*). As addressed to those who themselves became the teachers of the Gospel, we must understand our Lord to promise both strength and quickening to the natural powers and supernatural inspiration and guidance. The reference which immedi-

ately follows is to accurate reporting of the Saviour's own words, perhaps even more than that (ὁπομνήσει ὑμᾶς πάντα ἃ εἶπον ὑμῖν). "All that I said" may mean "All the doctrine which I taught you, all the Gospel which I gave the world." Such a promise would apply not merely to those who were followers and companions and eye-witnesses during the Lord's ministry, but to those who were united with them in the work of teaching Christianity, as the Apostle Paul and the two evangelists, Mark and Luke. And in the case of the Apostle John, writing at the end of the first century, even though we should admit that he has passed the words of Christ through his own mind, selecting those discourses which seemed to him most fitting to be recorded, and sometimes perhaps giving rather the substance of what was said than the literal transcript of the language (though we by no means allow that this must necessarily have been the case), still the promise was that what the Lord really said should be recalled by the Spirit and not by the mere natural force of recollection. The spiritual teaching accompanied the raised and excited memory. In chap. xv., by the side of the witness-bearing of the disciples, the Testimony of the Spirit is promised: "*He shall testify of Me.*" This no doubt refers to the marvellous signs of the Spirit's power and operation subsequently given. The miraculous gifts poured out on the apostles and on many others were a powerful evidence to the Divine origin of Christianity. The early Church would certainly not have won the successes which so astonished

the world if the Spirit had not borne witness directly and in His own Divine method. The promise of inspiration is more fully expressed in chap. xvi. 13-16. They would be guided into "*all the Truth*;" and how comprehensive that promise is we see from what follows. "*He shall not speak of Himself*" (ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ), *i.e.*, the Truth which He shall teach is the Truth given to Him by God the Father through God the Son. "*Whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak.*" The Saviour warns His disciples against false spirits which went out into the world. There can be no divergence of the Spirit's testimony from the whole Divine Revelation. The gift of prophecy would be part of that inspiration which was promised. "*He will show you things to come*" (καὶ τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν). The Apostle John would not be likely to forget that promise, seeing that he himself was the inspired seer of the New Testament. But that there might be no mistake in the minds of the disciples as to the nature of the Truth into which they would be guided, our Lord declared that it was the Truth as it was in Him, of which He Himself, the Saviour, the Incarnate Son of God, was the centre and substance. "He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine (or from Me He shall receive (ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήψεται), and shall show it (announce) unto you." "*All things that the Father hath are Mine.*" There is no limitation in such words, for the Truth of Christ is the Truth of God. Christ and the Father are one. "*Therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you.*" Mine are the things of God the Father. These are the words of One

who, having ascended up on high, filled all things. All Truth was taken up into Christ. All Truth is in the highest sense true as it is seen in Christ.

5. The procession of the Spirit, though not formally stated in dogmatic language, is yet both directly taught and indirectly suggested. The words which have just been adduced certainly contain the doctrine. The things of God are the things of Christ; the Spirit will not speak of Himself, but as He receives of God the Father and the Son. In the fifteenth chapter the Spirit of Truth is declared to "*proceed from the Father*" (ὁ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται). And the Saviour distinctly affirms that *if He depart He will send the Spirit*. Because He goes to the Father, therefore He sends the Comforter. There is no need to perplex our minds by attempting to find in the word "*procession*" anything more than is taught by Christ in these farewell words. He was not speaking of the mystery of the Trinity, He was speaking of the work of the Spirit. It has been pointed out by scholars that the use of *παρὰ* (instead of *ἐκ*) shows that the meaning is "*from the side of*." Dr. Westcott says:—"The original term (ἐκπορεύεται, Vulg. *procedit*) may in itself either describe proceeding from a source or proceeding on a mission. The use of the term *παρὰ* in this place seems, therefore, to show decisively that the reference here is to the temporal mission of the Holy Spirit, and not to the eternal procession. At the same time, the use of the present (*proceedeth*) in contrast with the future (*I will send*) brings out the truth that the mission of the Spirit consequent on the exaltation of the Son



was the consummation of His earlier working in the world. In this respect the revelation of the mission of the Spirit to men *corresponds to* the revelation of the eternal relations of the Spirit. (*From the Father, through the Son*)" (p. 225). Luthardt confirms this view, and Alford justly remarks, that as the Saviour is said to send the Spirit from the Father, the procession is the sending by the Son. "At all events this passage, as Bengel remarks, cannot be alleged either one way or the other in the controversy with the Greek Church on the procession of the Holy Spirit." There is often the same confusion produced in theology by taking words that are employed economically as though they were intended entologically. Had our Saviour meant to speak of the essential relations between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, He would surely have spoken much more clearly. He is not teaching His disciples dogmatic theology. He is preparing them practically for their work. It is only as an agent that the Spirit can be said to proceed. But while the term "procession" must not be pressed too far, the whole teaching of these last discourses is a confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity and of the personality of the Spirit.

6. Another important subject included in the words adduced is the mission of the Spirit to the world. "*And He, when He is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged.*" By the world

must, of course, be intended the unbelieving world, that is, men as both negatively and positively opposed to Christ. The mission of the Spirit is said to be to convict or reprove (ἐλεγχειν—Vulg. *arguere*), and the preposition *περι* must be taken in the sense concerning, or in respect of. The chief sphere of the Spirit's work is, therefore, defined to be "*Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment*;" as Dr. Westcott puts it, "the cardinal elements in the determination of man's spiritual state. In these his past and present and future are severally summed up. Then, when the mind has seized the broad divisions of the spiritual analysis, the central fact in regard to each is stated, from which the process of testing, of revelation, of condemnation, proceeds." "The idea of 'conviction' is complex. It involves the conception of authoritative examination, of unquestionable proof, of decisive judgment, of punitive power. Whatever the final issue may be, he who 'convicts' another places the truth of the case in dispute in a clear light before him, so that it must be seen and acknowledged as truth. He who then rejects the conclusion which this exposition involves, rejects it with his eyes open and at his peril." "The three words, Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment, gain an additional fulness of meaning when taken in connection with the actual circumstances under which they were spoken. The world, acting through its representatives, had charged Christ as a 'sinner' (John ix. 24). Its leaders 'trusted that they were righteous' (Luke xviii. 9), and they were just on the point of giving sentence against 'the Prince of Life' (Acts iii. 15) as a malefactor (John xviii. 30).

At this point the threefold error (Acts iii. 17) which the Spirit was to reveal and reprove had brought at last its fatal fruit" (p. 228). The work of the Spirit was to put the rejection of Christ before the world in such a light that the world would be convinced of sin. The work by which the Spirit wrought this conviction was manifold, but we can scarcely doubt that the Lord especially referred to those wonderful manifestations of spiritual power and gifts which closely followed the Lord's ascension, and which proved that those who believed in Him were divinely authorised, and those who rejected Him were guilty of an awful sin. Hence the Lord could refer to a particular time as the time when the Spirit would come and convict the world. It was the time when the Spirit was poured out. But that may be taken as the beginning of a work going on all through time. The world still rejects Christ; the state of unbelief is a state of sin because Christ has come and the pardon of sin is freely offered. All sin centres in rejection of Christ. And Christianity, by its action in the world, quickens and enlightens the conscience, so that men are much more "without excuse." "The times of ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 30). Again, "*concerning righteousness*" the world required new conviction. While Jesus was on earth there was a Righteous Man on whom all could look, and who, by His righteousness, "exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," and differing so essentially from the righteousness of the Gentile world, held up to the world both a doctrine and

an example of righteousness. But when Jesus went to the Father, and He was seen no more living the righteous life and setting forth the true doctrine of righteousness, then the Spirit took up His work, both as prophet and priest, and carried it on to perfection. The moral and spiritual work of the Kingdom of Christ, by which the world is both convinced and converted, is wrought by the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of believers and of the Church of Christ as a society. It was both God's righteousness and man's righteousness to which the Lord referred. His death, resurrection, and ascension "indicated righteousness." "The condemnation of Christ by the representatives of Israel showed in the extremest form how men had failed to apprehend the nature of righteousness. The Spirit, therefore, starting from the facts of Christ's life, His suffering, and His glory, regarded as a whole, lays open the Divine aspects of human action as concentrated in the Son of Man. In this way the possibilities of life are revealed in fellowship with Him who has raised humanity to Heaven" (Westcott, p. 229). And the last of the terms applied to the Spirit's mission is just as clearly illuminated by the facts of Christian history. "Judgment" is what the world never did rightly understand and exercise in its own methods and with its own light. "God hath appointed a Day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead." The crucifixion was a crisis of the world, and in that act the prince of this world was judged.

The victory of Christ was the condemnation of the world. And the Spirit again took up His new and special mission commencing with those facts, and convincing the world that Christ is judging it, and will judge it, by the whole history of His manifestations from the Day of Pentecost onwards.

7. The last of the Saviour's utterances was the commission given to His apostles (John xx. 21-23) (*cf.* Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Mark xvi. 15-18; Luke xxiv. 49), "Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Somewhat similar was the commission to Simon Peter (Matt. xvi. 18), and that to the Christian Church (Matt. xviii. 18). It must be borne in mind that both the action of our Lord and the words derive peculiar force from the fact that He had at that time risen from the dead. The breath of His resurrection body may have had in itself a spiritual power, though it is not certain that the act of breathing on the disciples (*ἐνεφύσησε*) was more than a sign to impress their minds. It must also be remembered that those to whom the Lord spoke were already spiritually quickened; therefore He could not mean, as some have said, "*become spiritual men*." Nor is the analogy of creation—God breathing into man the breath of life—strictly applicable. The promise was that the Spirit should come in His gifts and in His special operations. Therefore the

commission was to use the gifts of the Spirit, "*take it*" (λαβετε) "as from Me, the King, imparting authority unto you, the ministers and representatives of My Church." The presence and work of the Spirit were the sanctification of the Church. The apostles could not have commenced the work of Christianity as a kingdom except they had been endued with power from on high. The interpretation given to this passage by the Sacramentarians lays stress on the power abiding in the Church. But Dr. Westcott himself admits that the words were not addressed to ministers as ministers, but to disciples as disciples; the power therefore abides not in offices or administrations, but in the society itself. It is a "*power to declare the fact and the conditions of forgiveness.*" But as such the words must be regarded as really fulfilled in the first age of the Church, and it is an abuse of the Saviour's words to suppose that He conveyed by them a power to individuals to bestow the authority on individuals. "Thomas was not with them" at the time. Did he forfeit the blessing by his absence? Were not other apostles subsequently introduced on whom no such words were pronounced? Surely it cannot be maintained that there is any definition in Christ's language of a channel of Grace. He was blessing the apostles and disciples in an assembly, and giving them authority to preach the forgiveness of sins and commence the dispensation of forgiveness; but when the first disciples had fulfilled their official life as leaders of the Church, nothing in these parting words of the Saviour would warrant our thinking that they deputed any such authority or power to their successors.

They were appointed to open the door of the Kingdom, but they were not commanded to consecrate doorkeepers to succeed them. The voice of the Church is one, and it is the voice of universal invitation : "*Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.*" If there were any such extraordinary meaning to be attached to these words, as the theory of apostolical succession supposes, they would surely have been more distinctly repeated on other occasions and by other evangelists. There is no decided proof that the apostles were alone addressed. If other disciples were with them, the words applied to all who believed in Jesus—who came together after His Ascension and formed the nucleus of the Christian Church. The power resides not in individuals and offices, but in the society of believers, in the communion of saints. "Ye are the temple of God," said the Apostle Paul, "and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." The whole teaching of the Scriptures, as we have seen, up to the point of the Saviour's Ascension, set forth a doctrine of Free Grace, of universal spiritual endowment. It would be a strange inconsistency if at the very end of His ministry, when the disciples were about to be left behind Him to carry on His work for the salvation of the world, He then withdrew the unrestricted liberty which He had proclaimed and shut in the Grace of God within the narrow limits of official distinctions and prescribed ordinations. It was as witnesses to Christ that the apostles and their fellow-believers began their work. They testified to a Gospel which does not bind itself in set forms or run in narrow channels ; like the stream

which flowed from the rock smitten in the wilderness, while it proceeds from one fountain opened for sin and uncleanness in Jesus Christ Himself, it flows freely and abundantly into the midst of the perishing multitude, and those who are Christ's representatives simply publish the fact and invite the world to be forgiven through faith. This, however, is a subject to which justice cannot be done until we have looked more closely at the record of the apostolic ministry itself and the writings which were given to the world by the holy men who received the Spirit that they might guide all who came after them into the full knowledge of the Truth. In the Acts and Epistles the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is taught both by facts and apostolic statements with the greatest clearness, and there we can see without doubt what was the belief of Christians on the subject during the two generations which followed the Saviour's Ascension.



## CHAPTER VI.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AS IT IS TAUGHT IN  
THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, AND IN THE EPISTLES AND  
APOCALYPSE.

It is admitted now, almost universally, that the Book of the Acts of the Apostles was written by the author of the Third Gospel, and that writer was Luke, the companion and fellow-traveller of the Apostle Paul. The opening words of the two books compared together seem to show that when they were written the teaching given to those who sought to know what were the facts and doctrines of the religion of Christ was becoming a systematic teaching, and therefore apostolic inspiration and authority were acknowledged. In the Gospel the evangelist describes the facts which he is about to relate as "*the things which are most surely believed among us*" (περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων), and the object aimed at is that Theophilus "*might know the certainty of those things (λόγων) wherein thou hast been instructed.*" The second book is introduced as a continuation of the first. "*The former treatise (λογος) have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began (ἤρξατο) both to do and teach.*" Both writings, therefore, are in the nature of text-books for catechumens, the first, of the facts of the Gospel until

the Ascension ; the second, of the Acts of the Apostles as a continuation of what Jesus did and taught. We are at once brought face to face with the fact, that the work and teaching of apostles is the work and teaching of Christ continued in the world. And it is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit which is set forth as constituting this unity of Christ and His apostles. In the early Church there cannot be a doubt that the title of the Acts, "Acts of the Apostles," would convey the idea that apostolic acts were part of the fundamental constitution of Christianity, were virtually acts of Christ. As we should expect, therefore, on the first page of the Acts we meet with language which indicates a decided advance in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is said to have given commandments to His apostles through the forty days between the Resurrection and Ascension. Those commandments are said to be "*through the Holy Ghost*" (ἐντειλαμενος τοις ἀποστόλοις δια Πνεύματος ἁγίου). The commandments of Christ, as coming from Himself, would be Divine. But the Holy Spirit is mentioned in view of what is about to be related, *i.e.*, as resting upon the apostles and giving them power. The promise of the Father which they had had of Jesus, *i.e.*, in the farewell discourses, was brought into close proximity with the fact of the Ascension. Our Lord, in His interview with His disciples, renewed the promise, and spoke more definitely of the descent of the Holy Spirit. "*Wait for the promise of the Father,*" that is, for its fulfilment, and "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "When they were come together," the Lord

said again, "*Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.*" Here we must notice that the coming of the Holy Ghost is represented as receiving power (ἀνέπεσθε δύναμιν), and also that it is called a "baptism in, or with, the Holy Ghost," and compared with that of John, which was "*with water*" (ὑδατι). It is simply impossible to identify the baptism thus promised with regeneration. Plainly the Saviour referred to a special baptism, the object of which was bestowal of power (δύναμις). The Holy Spirit must be regarded as giving to the apostles that which qualified them for their work. No such idea is properly to be found in the words as that on the Day of Pentecost the apostles were endued with a power to regenerate, nor is the baptism promised them the baptism of regeneration, but the baptism of power. Hence the vocation assigned to them, "*Ye shall be witnesses unto Me;*" that is, "The facts and words which come forth from you under inspiration shall testify of the presence and power of Christ." However little the apostles could anticipate the exact form of the baptism which was coming upon them, it is very evident from their solemn appeal to God by lot, in the election of Matthias, and the Apostle Peter's reference to the words of the Psalms as "*spoken by the Holy Ghost*" concerning Jesus, that they were full of the thought of a coming inspiration as they continued in prayer waiting in Jerusalem. The Day of Pentecost was not actually mentioned beforehand by our Lord as the date of the baptism, but the fact that all "were with one accord in one place" on that day indicates their preparation of heart. Pente-

cost was the "feast of harvest," the "feast of first-fruits," or the "feast of weeks." It was the fiftieth day, reckoned from the second day of the Passover, 16th Nisan. "The fifty days formally included the period of grain-harvest, commencing with the offering of the first sheaf of the barley-harvest in the Passover, and ending with that of the two first loaves which were made from the wheat-harvest at this festival. It was the offering of these two loaves which was the distinguishing rite of the Day of Pentecost" ("Smith's Dict."). The disciples would naturally, as faithful Jews, be thinking of the season, and of the fruits which Jesus had promised should be the reward of their labours. They were themselves the first-fruits, but they were to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. The harvest would become universal. They were the beginning of the Kingdom of Christ. The simple narrative given us in the second chapter of the Acts warrants no such conclusions as have been drawn from it. If the apostles understood that they were baptized with the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost in order to inaugurate at that time a regenerating rite, surely they would have acted and spoken quite differently. They did not say, "Now we are endowed with power to make you Christians by baptism," but what they did say was, "Believe in these signs of Grace, receive the Grace they represent, repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ;" and the result is declared: "*Then they that gladly received His Word were baptized.*" This is not the place for a full

discussion of all the questions which suggest themselves in the narrative of the Acts. But the manner of the relation surely confirms the view that the Day of Pentecost was only in such sense the commencement of the Christian Church in that it was a line of demarcation from the former state of things and the inauguration of an apostolic ministry and work. There was a society in the upper chamber before. There was an inspiration before. There was a baptism before. But on the Day of Pentecost there was a more decided separation of the Christian Church from the world, and there was a descent of heavenly gifts, and there was a new start in the work of baptizing converts to Christ. The miracle of the tongues of fire set forth the inspiration of believers, not necessarily of apostles. The idea of it is power to preach and to convert the world. "And when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (chap. ii. 1-4). It was after the multitude had expressed their astonishment at utterances which must have been bestowed on many more than the apostles—for there were a hundred and twenty together—that "*Peter stood up with the eleven*" and preached. The apostles at once assumed the guidance of the rest, as they were appointed to their

position by the Lord Himself. But the inspiration of the Day of Pentecost was on all the Church. Hence we observe the *universal* spirit of the address in which the Apostle invites all the people to come and partake of the Grace thus signified. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days (saith God) I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: yea, and on My servants and on My handmaidens in those days will I pour forth of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (chap. ii. 16-18). Again, it is Jesus, "by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost," who "hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." "Ye shall receive this gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (chap. ii. 33, 38, 39). There is no restriction of the gift to the apostles. There is no formal assignment in such words of the Grace of God to any commission whatever. The promise is for all, and all are invited to receive it: "*Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*" That is, come out by baptism and be ye separate and receive the Holy Ghost. It is difficult to understand how, apart from any preconceived theory, the account of the Day of Pentecost can be interpreted to mean anything else than the free gifts which apostles proclaimed and no doubt ministered, but not with any exclusive claims of their own put forth.

The whole Church was inspired. The inspiration was promised to sons and daughters, men-servants and maid-servants, old and young. That there was an outpouring of the Spirit upon the people generally is proved by the fact that in that one day there were added to the one hundred and twenty, three thousand souls, and that they were partakers of the Spirit is implied in the description of their steadfastness: "*And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and the prayers*" (Revised Version). They are also called "the saved," or "those who were being saved," which no doubt refers to the fact that, in accordance with the Apostle's words, they saved themselves from that untoward generation by separation from them in the true Church. But a question naturally arises out of the words of the Apostle Peter (chap. ii. 38), when he seems to say that "*the gift of the Holy Ghost*" follows "*repentance and remission of sins.*" Now, the promise which is quoted from Joel certainly refers to the gifts which should be manifested in prophesying. It is not said, "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, and they shall repent and be forgiven," but "they shall prophesy." Undoubtedly, therefore, it is to the signs of salvation in the gifts poured out that the apostle specially refers. Repent, be baptized, separate yourselves from the world to God, believe in Christ to the forgiveness of your sins, and you are henceforth saved, and members of the Kingdom of Heaven. The sign of your acceptance will be that the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon you as you have seen it poured out upon the company

of disciples. It is of the utmost importance to keep distinctly separate in our minds the two kinds of bestowments recognised in the early Church. The Spirit of God was given to repentance and remission of sins. The Spirit of God was given to seal salvation by signs from Heaven. The actual sign which was given on the Day of Pentecost must not be understood to be a mere supernatural effect wrought upon the organs of speech. Whether we understand the Gift of Tongues to mean the gift of mysterious utterance, which was interpreted by those who had at the time the gift of interpretation, as was apparently the case subsequently; or whether we understand the tongues to mean known foreign languages or dialects of Hebrew, in which the disciples were enabled to speak so that the audience understood them, coming from different parts of the world; the chief constituent of the supernatural is not in the effect wrought upon the fleshly organs, but in the gift of inspiration, the power of prophecy. "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (*τα μεγαλεῖα τοῦ θεοῦ*), that is, those great and wonderful things which shall attend the revelation of Messiah's Kingdom. When we remember that "all those who spoke were Galileans," and that they were "unlearned and ignorant men," it was a supernatural elevation of their faculties and of their faith which was manifested. As to the languages represented, when we come to analyse the description we find that the tongues mentioned may be said to group themselves round the Hebrew, Greek, and Persian, for while strangers from



Rome might refer to Latin, it would not necessarily mean Latin-speaking people; Greek was mostly spoken by "*strangers from Rome*" (οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι). The Syriac, Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Persian languages would certainly represent most of those present. But while the number of languages might be small, it is impossible to dispense with a supernatural work, if "all those that spoke were Galileans." By no explanation can we be rid of the miracle. But what astonished the multitude was, that such streams of sacred eloquence should pour forth from such lips. When some of them suggested, "*These men are full of new wine,*" they referred, no doubt, to the fervour of the utterance, to the degree of excitement manifest in it, not to the confusion of the sounds, or to any sign of incapacity and disorder. The Gift of Tongues was the first of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit which subsequently were poured out in great abundance and variety, which, as the Apostle Paul enumerated to the Corinthians, were such as "miracles, gifts of healing, prophecy, discernings of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, helps, governments" (1 Cor. xii. 10, 28). These, no doubt, were often bestowed directly by the apostles, as we shall see in the course of this review of the Acts, but they were also bestowed apart altogether from the apostles, and by immediate outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and we cannot doubt they were very largely exercised by the Church in many places, not to say every place, and had much to do with the rapid progress of the Gospel. They were signs both of the acceptance of individual

believers, and also of the presence and working of the Spirit of God in "convicting the world of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment."

The miracle wrought by the two apostles Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple follows in the narrative immediately after the account of the Day of Pentecost. There may have been a few weeks of interval between the two great signs, but they were days when spiritual marvels were witnessed in the conversion of souls; so that the people were being prepared for what occurred. The miracle, however, being very startling in itself, as wrought upon a man lame from his birth, and well known to be so by the whole city, filled the multitude "*with wonder and amazement.*" When the Apostle Peter took it as a text and preached repentance and conversion, he appealed to the people to receive the Spirit of God, "that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (chap. iii. 19). "The restoration of all things" to which the Apostle points evidently refers to the promise of a new Heaven and a new earth, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the times of the Messiah. The reference is to the prophecies of Isaiah, where, as we have seen, the promise of the Spirit is very distinct: "*God having raised up His Servant, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.*" Spiritual blessings are signified and promised by these external signs and wonderful works. The attack which followed in which the Sadducees took the chief part, because the fact of the Saviour's Resurrection so plainly destroyed

their position and proved the spiritual world to be real, brought out all the more conspicuously the inspiration of the apostles. Peter was "*filled with the Holy Ghost.*" He spake as he was moved by the Spirit, according to the Saviour's promise; and when the enemies "saw the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled, and they took knowledge of them (or ascertained) that they had been with Jesus" (chap. iv. 13). It was not only in the leaders, in the apostles, that the Spirit manifested His presence, the company of believers waiting and praying receive again the sign of the Spirit's supernatural guidance and inspiration. "*And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all*" (chap. iv. 31-33). There can be no doubt whatever that the apostles were simply "*primi inter pares.*" All were filled with the Holy Ghost. The apostles were leaders only because they were Christ's chosen witnesses, who had received special grace by their attendance upon Him, and were fitted by their knowledge and wisdom to be counsellors of others. Barnabas is called "*the Son of Consolation*" (*υἱὸς παρακλήσεως*) with evident refer-

ence to the work of the Paraclete. The apostles gave him that name, doubtless, because there was so much of the power of the Spirit in him; perhaps because he had special gifts of speech, or because his self-sacrifice in selling his land in Cyprus and laying the price at the apostles' feet had a great influence over the people to follow his example. Ananias and Sapphira, pretending to do the same, were claiming to be similarly under the influence of the Spirit of God; and as they were lying, their action is represented as a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, *i.e.*, pretending to be under spiritual influence when they knew they were not. “*Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?*” (ψεύσασθαί σε τὸ Πνεῦμα το ἅγιον), *i.e.*, to make a pretence with respect to the Holy Ghost? “*Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.*” The sin was not in keeping back part of the price, but in pretending that they were so much under the influence of the Spirit that they had given all. So the Apostle said to Sapphira, “*How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?*” It was a time of great signs and great manifestation of the Spirit. “And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch. But of the rest durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the people magnified them; and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women; insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might

overshadow some of them. And there also came together the multitude from the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one" (chap. v. 12-16). Such an occurrence as the judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira, in which the Apostle Peter took so prominent a part, would naturally surround the apostolic leaders with a great solemnity; and as the number of believers rapidly increased, it would become necessary that the men who were specially endowed, and who were set apart by the Lord to be His witnesses, should put themselves distinctly at the head of the Church, so far as teaching and working were concerned. Although it is said that the people attributed power to the shadow of Peter, it is not said that Peter himself did so. It is mentioned rather to show how great the effect was on the minds of the multitude. The miracles were wrought not by shadows but by the Spirit of God, and the men by whose hands they were wrought were men who were "*filled with the Holy Ghost.*" The Life, which the apostles were commanded to go and speak of to the people in the Temple, ("*the words of this life*") was the life which the Spirit of God gave, by which both souls and bodies were healed and quickened. To that Spirit they bore witness before the rulers. "*Him hath God exalted with His own right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him*" (chap. v. 31, 32). The appointment of the seven deacons is another testimony

to the pervading presence of the Spirit. Those who were to be selected were to be men of honest report, "*full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.*" Stephen is particularly mentioned as "*full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.*" They were set before the apostles by the Church, *i.e.*, by the Church's selection by vote; "*And the apostles prayed, laying their hands on them;*" that is, they ordained them to their office by a prayer of consecration. The special inspiration given to Stephen as a newly appointed deacon shows very clearly that, while the apostles were leaders and had no doubt supreme authority, others were endowed with powers both of speech and of miraculous works. "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." *Those who disputed with him "were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake."* The condemnation of their unbelief is pronounced by Stephen as resistance to the Holy Ghost (chap. vii. 51), and the wonderful boldness and elevation with which Stephen spake is ascribed to his inspiration. "*But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.*" The power to look beyond the world of sense and see into Heaven is the power which was given by the Spirit to prophets in the olden times. This is the first instance in the New Testament in which it is given to an inspired man, and it is remarkable that the first believer in Christ to see Heaven opened was not an apostle, but the deacon

Stephen. The same power was given afterwards in many instances, no doubt; and both in the case of the Apostle Paul and in that of the Seer of the Apocalypse the visions seen are distinctly mentioned and ascribed to the Spirit of God. Perhaps the gift called the Gift of Prophecy, which the Apostle Paul enumerates among the other gifts of the Spirit, included "*visions*;" certainly the promise given through Joel pointed to such gifts: "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." And our Lord declared to Nathanael that among the greater things which He should see would be, "Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." The deacon Philip is another instance of inspiration. There was a great work of the Spirit in many souls. The persecution led by Saul of Tarsus drove out the believers from Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout Judea and Samaria, and they "went everywhere preaching the Word." Philip, however, was more than an evangelist. He wrought great signs. "And the people" (of Samaria) "with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which He did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city" (chap. viii. 4-8). Philip's manifestation of the Spirit of God stood over against the sorcery and witchcraft of Simon Magus, who gave out that "he was some great one." They said, "This Man is that power of

God which is called Great" (chap. viii. 10). There seems reason to believe that they meant by this that Simon was not only what the Samaritans would call a *δύναμις* or angel, but the very incarnation of the Supreme Deity Himself. Jerome reports his words, "*Ego sum sermo Dei, ego sum Speciosus, ego Paracletus, ego Omnipotens, ego omnia Dei*" (Jer. on Matt. xxiv. 5). The victory obtained over Simon would be regarded as a special manifestation of the Spirit of God. Whether there was any true work in Simon's heart or not it is difficult to say, but his baptism was a decided blow by which the heathenish superstitions were struck down. He continued for a time with Philip, "and wondered beholding the miracles and signs which were done" (*δυνάμεις καὶ σημεῖα μεγάλα γισνόμενα*). Philip, therefore, was a worker of great miracles and a great preacher. But whether by distinct arrangement with the apostles, or whether Philip, being only a deacon, was afraid to encroach on the apostolic office, it is certainly clearly stated that the apostles sent two of their number to Samaria, Peter and John, to see what the work was which was done by Philip, and to pray for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. It is not actually stated that Philip's prayers would not have prevailed, but it is implied that he did not put his hands on them. "For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Simon evidently understood that the gift of the Holy Ghost was imparted simply and solely through the



laying on of the apostles' hands. He offered money to purchase the same power, "that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." "The gift of God," said Peter, is not to be purchased with money. But are we to understand that it was to be obtained by mere laying on of hands? It is ascribed to the *prayers* of the apostles. The prayer of a righteous man availeth much. It was not strictly "ordination" that the apostles went down to Samaria to add to the faith of the people there. It was the outpouring of spiritual gifts. They were to be baptized with Pentecostal Grace. The power was ministered doubtless chiefly through the laying on of the apostles' hands, but certainly not necessarily and exclusively, as we see in the case of the assembly in the house of Cornelius. But in Samaria it seemed especially suitable that apostolic order and method should at once be introduced among a people who had been bewitched for a long time by a wild sorcerer, and who might have been ready to put Philip the evangelist in the place from which Simon the magician had been thrust out. Again, we are led to notice that the "*gift of the Holy Spirit*," bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, was not the gift of faith, not the gift by which the soul is brought out of darkness into light and quickened to a new life, but the gift whereby miracles were wrought and signs given to the world. Those who were already, as believers in the Lord Jesus, baptized and separated from the world, received the Holy Ghost that they might be witnesses for Him to their neighbours, not only by a holy life, but by special power

poured out upon them from on high. Dean Alford's note on this passage is a very valuable one (see *in loco*), and, as he truly observes, the relation of the Jews to the Samaritans made it particularly desirable that the apostles should sanction as soon as possible the work done by Philip. Not only would the presence of Peter and John guarantee the teaching of the evangelist, but the visible signs of the Spirit would leave it beyond all possible doubt that a Samaritan Church was to be included in the new Kingdom; and that was a startling fact which would prepare the minds of the Jewish believers for an entire surrender of their old position as the exclusive depositaries of Divine Grace. The visit of Philip to Samaria may have been the result of a special spiritual work in his own heart, enlarging it to embrace the semi-heathen population of that country. And the narrative which immediately follows is a natural corollary to the conversion of the Samaritans. The same man who by the Spirit of God went down to Samaria, by the Spirit of God through an angel of the Lord was sent away south to the way going down from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert. It was the Spirit of God which said to him, when he saw the eunuch in his chariot, "Go near and join thyself to this chariot;" and there was no doubt about Philip's inspiration, for he *ran* in obedience to the Divine impulse, and preached to the eunuch a Gospel which was carried by him to Ethiopia, to the Gentile world, even before the time when Simon Peter, the leader of the Church, was delivered from his prejudices by the vision sent him on the house-

top. So the Spirit wrought both in deacons and in apostles; and it was the same Spirit "dividing unto every one severally as He willed." His operations were manifold. He "*caught away Philip*" (ἡρπασε) as He had taken him into the desert. His action was not only on the thoughts, but on the whole man, even including his bodily movements.

The conversion of the Apostle Paul, like all true conversions, was the work of the Spirit of God. The conflict which went on in Saul's heart, in which he found it hard to kick against the goading reproaches of his conscience, was a spiritual process in which Truth was applied by Divine Power. Saul, stricken to the ground by the glory revealed to him, begins to pray ("Behold, he prayeth"), visions are granted him, and it is promised that he shall be a chosen vessel unto the Lord, "being filled with the Holy Ghost." While Saul increased in boldness and preached with wonderful power, the Churches had rest "throughout Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." Miracles continued to be wrought, as in the case of Æneas at Lydda and the raising of Dorcas at Joppa. The dispensation of the Spirit was still, however, regarded by the apostles as restrained within the limits of Jewish associations and observances. The visit of Peter and John to Samaria and the work of Philip prepared the way for great changes, but until special signs were given from Heaven the action of the leaders of the Church was timid and reserved. Cesarea

was beyond all doubt a place to which the Apostle would not have gone of his own accord, and especially to the house of Cornelius, a Roman centurion. But the whole succession of events is placed before us as Divinely ordered and connected with special spiritual guidance and inspiration. Visions are again the channel of communication. The centurion saw an angel, Peter fell into an ecstasy in prayer, and saw Heaven opened. While the Apostle thought over the vision and what it meant, "The Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them." The Spirit speaks as God and as Christ. The same fulness of persuasion that God directed him was given to every apostle. It is not for us to say in what way the persuasion was realised. Jesus promised that His witnesses should be told what to say and what to do. The address which was delivered at Cesarea was received by those assembled as "*commanded of God,*" and in it the Apostle testifies to the Spirit. "*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power.*" No doubt the whole action of Peter was equivalent to a prayer for the Spirit. Obedience is of the nature of prayer (*laborare est orare*). All were waiting for the gift, and their attitude asked for it. But there was no formal laying on of hands. Such ceremonies were not essential. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. And they of the Circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter,

because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (chap. x. 44-48). Nothing can be more decisive than this case. It plainly shows that baptism was not essential but formal. It makes it beyond dispute that the presence and operation of the Spirit of God were not dependent on any ceremony or on any form of words, but on the preaching of the Truth as it is in Jesus. Moreover, the fact that the Gentiles, in this first apostolic admission of them publicly and openly into the Christian Church, were baptized because they had received the Holy Ghost, shows that baptism was not regarded as the channel of the Spirit, it was a mere accompanying or following sign of the Spirit's presence and work. Unbaptized people were filled with the Holy Ghost—not in an exceptional case, but in a case fully and formally related in the Acts as a typical and representative case for the guidance of all future times. That it was a decisive case is seen by what follows in the narrative, that "they that were of the circumcision contended with Peter, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (chap. xi. 2, 3). The whole circumstances are related a second time, and with even greater precision, for the Apostle says that it was as he "*began* to speak that the Holy Ghost fell" on the Gentiles. They were

baptized with the Holy Ghost before they were baptized with water, and the Jewish disciples had nothing to say against facts so plain. It would be well if Christians of these days would accept such decided testimony to the secondary place of baptism with the same submission. "They held their peace and glorified God." The gifts which were poured out at Cesarea were in like manner bestowed in many places in the Gentile world; but for a time those who preached preached to Jews only, and even at Antioch only to Hellenistic Jews. Many were added to the Lord. But the one great want was a leader who should put himself at the head of the new advance movement into the heathen world. Such a leader was the Apostle Paul, and through Barnabas, who was himself a "good man and full of the Holy Ghost," the new convert was fetched from Tarsus to Antioch, where he would be in an element by which he would be specially prepared for his future work. For a whole year they "assembled with the Church at Antioch and taught much people: and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch;" from which we can gather that already there was a relaxing of the Jewish narrowness and a mingling together of the believers under a new name which helped them to separate from the old.

The presence of the Spirit was a conspicuous fact in this new centre of the rising Christianity. Prophets came down from Jerusalem. Agabus "signified by the Spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar." Such prophetic power was analogous to the

visions and special intimations given to others, and seems to have been a not infrequent sign of the Spirit in those times. The spirit of prayer was never absent from the Church at that crisis of their expanding work and commencing sufferings. They prayed, and the angel of the Lord delivered Peter, sleeping between two soldiers. "The Word of God grew and multiplied." At Antioch there was a company of inspired prophets and teachers, amongst whom were Barnabas and Saul. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." This is the first instance of what we may designate a solemn ordination of Christian ministers to the work of preaching the Gospel; and it is very instructive to notice that not an apostle was present at Antioch at the time, except that one who was not among the original twelve, and was himself ordained on this occasion. The missionary work which then commenced was no doubt cautiously carried on at first, and invariably for a time by preaching first in the synagogues of the Jews. But Sergius Paulus, at Paphos in Cyprus, was not a Jew, and when he desired to hear the Word of God he was addressed as a Gentile. Elymas the sorcerer, "a false prophet, a Jew," sought to turn away (that is, hinder) the deputy from the faith (from believing), and "Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost," pro-

nounced the sorcerer's condemnation and judgment, under direct inspiration, as Peter was when he sentenced Ananias and Sapphira. The opposition of the Jews led to a more decided consecration of the Apostle Paul to the work of preaching to the Gentiles, and many converts were made, of whom we read that "the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost." The missionary journeys and labours of the Apostle, fully described in subsequent chapters, were wonderful testimonies to the presence and power of the Spirit. The signs and wonders wrought were granted by the Lord to those who spake boldly in His name "the Word of His Grace" (Acts xiv. 3). And in the first Christian council held at Jerusalem, the apostles and elders, deliberating under the presidency of the Spirit, in distinct and humble dependence on His Divine guidance, regard their decisions as the decisions of the Spirit of God. "*It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us*" (chap. xv. 28), a remarkable form of expression, denoting that all alike were considered as filled with the Holy Ghost. Even in a solemn council the apostles did not regard themselves as more than leaders and guides. They were still ready to associate with themselves the elders of the Church and brethren assembled—"the apostles and elders and brethren" (chap. xv. 23). The missionaries travelled from place to place under inspired guidance, "forbidden of the Holy Ghost" to preach in some places, commanded to visit others, by visions and other signs, from which they "*assuredly gathered*" what the Lord called them to do. The Spirit of God rebuked the spirit of divination at Philippi. The Spirit of God filled



the two prisoners, Paul and Silas, with confidence and joy in the inner prison, with their feet made fast in the stocks. The Spirit of God testified to His power in the preaching of the Apostle Paul, even amidst the "flouts and jeers" of the philosophical Athenians, and at Corinth gave him many marvellous successes during eighteen months. At Ephesus the Apostle followed the precedent of Antioch and the example of the great Apostle of the Circumcision. Finding a small number of disciples who, under the preaching of Apollos, at that time absent in Corinth, had been baptized unto John's baptism, it was explained to them that the special need of the Church at this time was to be able to manifest the gifts of the Spirit. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" That is, having become nominally followers of Christ, have ye been baptized with the Spirit of Power? They were ignorant of such gifts, and possibly the work of the Spirit had not been expounded to them. "And they said unto Him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" (or, "Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given"—Revised Version). "And He said unto them, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. Then said Paul, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied.

And they were in all about twelve men." It was of the utmost importance that those twelve men should be endowed with power from on high. Their faith itself must have been imperfect, for Apollos was not fully instructed. They were holding a most influential position at Ephesus, and probably were capable by nature of great things. Their baptism a second time was not for the sake of their conversion; they were converted already. It was for the sake of their endowment as preachers and witnesses for Christ in Asia. "*They spake with tongues and prophesied.*" Like the Antioch believers, they received the Spirit that the Church at Ephesus might be mighty through God to pull down the stronghold of Satan. The subsequent events showed that it was. What is related of Paul was no doubt true of others besides. "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." The false exorcists were put to shame. Jews and Greeks confessed the power of God, and the books of magic and curious arts were burnt, as in Florence so many centuries afterwards, "before all men," in the market-place. "*So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.*" The power of the Spirit was manifested in the overthrow of heathenism.

The history of the Apostle Paul is the history of a man "*bound in the Spirit,*" as he described himself. He received his ministry from the Lord. He testified of the Grace of God. He followed the Spirit's guidance in all things. But it was what the Spirit said to himself that

bound him. The disciples at Tyre “said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.” The prophet Agabus came down from Judea to Cesarea and took Paul’s girdle and bound his own hands and feet, and said, “Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” But all that such messages did was to convince the Apostle that he must suffer. He was “ready not only to be bound, but to die for the Lord Jesus.” The Spirit spoke in his own heart telling him to fulfil his ministry, and the same Spirit, he knew, would be his inspiration and support to the end. He was cheered on his journey to Rome by the visions which were sent him. He was the same Divinely strengthened man all through his trials ; and when he came to Rome it was under the influence of the Spirit that he addressed the assembled Jews whom he called together, and charged them not to resist the Holy Ghost, as their fathers had done, quoting from Isaiah the solemn warning of God against hardened hearts and a reprobate mind. The whole testimony of this wonderful record in the Acts is to the Holy Ghost working in manifold ways amongst the people of God, with mighty signs and wonders ; not in the chief men alone, but all through the Church ; not only by the laying on of apostles’ hands, but freely and by direct communication from God in the proclamation of the Truth ; giving success to the Word ; casting down the opposition of the world ; the Comforter of the suffering people of God ; the Inspirer of apostles, prophets, elders, teachers, evan-

gelists, men like Apollos brought up in the learned schools of Alexandria, men like Barnabas coming from the quiet scenes of Cyprus, full of the spirit of consolation; all ages and all varieties of human life—a universal inspiration, lifting up Man into the glory of God.

We now pass on to the Epistles. The Epistle of James stands first in order of time, and represents the earliest form of Christian thought. It is addressed to those who clung to a Jewish standpoint, though acknowledging Jesus as Messiah. It was written for a practical purpose, to fortify the scattered believers against the trials to which they were exposed, and to stimulate them to maintain a pure and holy conversation. It is a remarkable fact that the word Spirit only occurs once in the whole Epistle (chap. iv. 5), rendered in Revised Version: “*Doth the Spirit which He made to dwell in us long unto envying?*” The passage is somewhat obscure, and can scarcely be said certainly to refer to the Holy Spirit personally regarded. Indirectly there is a reference throughout the Epistle to the work of Divine Grace in the heart, as in chap. i. 5: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God.” “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above” (chap. i. 17). “Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth” (chap. i. 18). “The engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls” (chap. i. 21). “This wisdom descendeth not from above” (chap. iii. 15). “The fruit of Righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (chap. iii. 18). “He giveth more Grace, wherefore He

saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth Grace unto the humble." "Cleanse your hands, sinners; and purify your hearts, double-minded" (chap. iv. 6, 8). "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (chap. v. 15). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," or "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (chap. v. 16). "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide (cover) a multitude of sins" (chap. v. 20). These passages are not direct evidences, as to the doctrine of the Spirit held by St. James, but they show that the Grace of God working inwardly upon the heart was regarded as the power whereby the fruits of righteousness were brought forth. The doctrine of faith and works expounded in the second chapter is a doctrine of spiritual life, and the law of liberty is the new law of Christ, which is "the law of the Spirit of life," not an external rule, but an inwardly grafted word bringing forth an external obedience, a royal Law of Love.

It must be acknowledged, however, that the Apostle Paul was the great teacher of the early Church on the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. His intellect was better adapted to grasp the materials of a theological doctrine than that of any other apostle. His wider sphere of ministration among people who might be said to have no religious belief, who needed to have very clear and decided statements of truth, prompted his mind to more definite thought. Hence we find that throughout the Pauline writings, even where dogmatic statement is

not attempted, the presence of dogmatic beliefs is easily traceable in the mind of the writer.

The two Epistles to the Thessalonians furnish us with what was perhaps the earliest form of the Apostle Paul's thought on Christian doctrine. The testimony which he gives to the work of the Spirit is very emphatic and full from the first. "*Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.*" Their joy was "*joy of the Holy Ghost*" (chap. i. 5, 6). The Word is a "*Word which effectually worketh* (*ἐνεργεῖται*) *in you that believe*" (chap. ii. 13). "*This is the will of God, even your sanctification*" (*ὁ ἁγιασμός ὑμῶν*); "*for God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth His Holy Spirit unto you*" (chap. iv. 7, 8). "*Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings.*" "*And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (chap. v. 19, 23). All these passages prove very clearly that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as we have seen it taught in the Gospels and Acts, was preached by the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, and that the work of the Spirit was witnessed among them and gave them assurance in their faith. The Second Epistle was written for a special purpose, to relieve the minds of the Thessalonians from an undue excitement with respect to the Day of the Lord. It is therefore chiefly taken up with a topic which would not call for the introduction of the doctrine of the Spirit,

but it is implied throughout, and the believers are "*chosen unto salvation from the beginning in sanctification of the Spirit*" (2 Thess. ii. 13). Every good wish which the Apostle expresses for them is summed up in the prayer that the "*grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*" should be with them. The Apostle, when he wrote these earliest writings, had not come to regard himself as a leading dogmatic teacher in the rising Christian Church; but as the opposition to his preaching was developed on the part of the Judaic party, he found it necessary not only to defend himself from their misrepresentations and the Churches from their false teaching, but to formulate more and more fully the doctrine which he called "*his gospel*."

The chronology of the Epistles is very difficult to determine. This is not the place to discuss it. There was certainly no very long interval of time between the Epistle to the Galatians and those to the Corinthians. Archdeacon Farrar has placed those to the Corinthians first; but in order of thought that to the Galatians seems earlier. It is plainly a protest against Judaistic teaching, and as such belonged to what we may call the controversial period in the Apostle's mental development. The writer claims a direct inspiration and revelation which placed him on a level with the pillars of the Church. He withstood Peter to the face. He testified to the Grace of God, which no Judaic prejudice should ever tempt him to frustrate. He had evidently carried to the Galatians not only the Gospel as a message, but the gifts of the Spirit. "This only would I learn from you, Received

ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?" "He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (chap. iii. 2, 3, 5). "*The promise of the Spirit*" is identified with the blessing of Abraham. It is the promise in the fulfilment of which "*we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*" "*Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father*" (chap. iv. 6). "*We, through the Spirit, by faith wait for the hope of righteousness*" (chap. v. 5). "*But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*" "*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*" "*If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk*" (chap. v. 16, 17, 22, 25). "*Ye which are spiritual (πνευματικοί), restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.*" "*He that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.*" "*For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature*" (or creation) (chap. vi. 1, 8, 15). These are very striking words. The doctrine of the new life is clearly and fully expressed. It is the same that was taught to Nicodemus by the Saviour. The



flesh is a principle from which proceed works by which men are excluded from the Kingdom of God. The Spirit produces, in those who walk by it, fruits against which there is no law—*i.e.*, which are acceptable in the sight of God. The distinction is plainly recognised between the life as originated and the life as expressed, between beginning and being perfected, between fleshly men and spiritual men, between sowing and reaping. The doctrine of the Spirit's quickening and leading was more fully, at least more decidedly, expounded in the Epistle to the Romans, which may be said to be the Apostle's dogmatic epistle. Where do we find throughout this Epistle to the Galatians one single word which sanctions the view that spiritual gifts were shut up in external rites, or limited in their bestowal to apostles and their successors? In the presence of Jewish opponents, had the Apostle been desirous to put forth such claims, they would certainly have been expressed in no doubtful language. The Galatians are invited to rejoice in the universal Grace of God.

The Epistles to the Corinthians possess a very special value because they were written to a philosophical people, and to a Christian Church which the Apostle testifies was "*enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge*," which "*came behind in no gift*," where the working of the Spirit was conspicuously manifest. The very first chapter of the First Epistle brings before us the fact that there is a dispensation of the Spirit which the Apostle put before all wisdom of this world, and which was apart from distinctions current amongst men. The foolish

things confound the wise ; the weak things confound the mighty. In other words, God's order is not the order of this world, but in Christ Jesus there is power and wisdom. He is made unto us (ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγενήθη) wisdom and righteousness (forensic holiness) and sanctification (personal holiness) and redemption (chap. i. 31). The reference is plainly to the work of the Spirit in Christ. So the Apostle rejoices to recall to the recollection of the Corinthians the manifestations of spiritual power at Corinth. "*My speech and my preaching were in demonstration* (ἀποδείξει) *of the Spirit and of power*" (chap. ii. 4). The passage which follows (chap. ii. 6-16) is one of the cardinal passages on the doctrine of the Spirit. The things hidden from the eye and untold to the ear by the great ones of this world ; the things that have never entered into human conceptions or into the heart of man—things which yet are prepared to be disclosed by God to those who love Him in due time, are revealed by the Spirit. "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God (or the depths) ; for what man (or who among men) knoweth the things of a man (or of man), save the spirit of the man which is in him ? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual (or interpreting spiritual things to

spiritual men). Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually judged. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ." Undoubtedly the Apostle is not claiming for himself and other ministers that they held any superior position above Christians generally, for he goes on to find fault with the Corinthians that they were not as fully possessed of the Spirit as they should have been. He speaks as one who had received special gifts. The things that he had spoken had been revealed to him, as he afterwards distinctly affirms in the case of the Lord's Supper. But all spiritual men judged by the Spirit that which was spoken to them. He uses the first person plural, not because he separated the apostles from others, but because he was addressing those who were themselves united with him as the temple of God. The distinction is drawn, and it is a very momentous distinction, between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world or Kosmos. What did the Apostle mean by this latter term? Did he mean no more than the Spirit of Evil? What again did he mean by the distinction between the psychical man and the spiritual man? Virtually these two distinctions are the same. In it lies the whole substance of the doctrine of inspiration and of the spiritual life. The "*world*" is not absolutely destitute of Divine guidance, and the Spirit of God has wrought more or less at

all times in the wisdom and in the works of men. But the psychical or natural man is one who is *not led* by the Spirit of God. The Apostle had no intention, we may feel quite sure, to disparage any of the natural faculties of men. Neither did he intend to do, as Tertullian and others did in the second century, to charge Philosophy itself with the faults of philosophers, or even the schools of Greece with directly injuring the cause of human advancement. He denies that man can know God, the deep things of God, apart from the Spirit of God. He claims for the Gospel of Christ that it brings us into vital and intimate relation to the Spirit of God. It does so through Christ, Who is the Wisdom of God and the Power of God. Reason itself tells us that the creature can only know the Creator as there is perfect reconciliation between the spirit of the creature and the Spirit of the Creator. As an abstract truth, this is at once accepted by every unprejudiced mind; but the natural man cannot understand why the great work of redemption should be necessary to this harmony between the human and the Divine. It is only in the Christian doctrine of sin that we find a key to the mystery. The natural man thinks of sin as mere defect, mere negative evil; the spiritual man is convinced that the essence of sin lies in the will, in the deepest self; that there can be no true reconciliation between the human spirit and the Divine until the new creation is effected, that is, until God breathes into the fallen creature a new will, a new nature, a new spirit. The Apostle recognised a dispensation of Divine gifts (*χαρίσματα*), which was initiated

by the mediation of Christ. The Spirit proceeded from God the Father and God the Son in their infinite union, which became a dispensation of the Spirit through redemption. The Lord ascended up on high and obtained gifts for men, even for the rebellious. This doctrine is more fully expressed in the later Epistles, but is the underlying truth in this Epistle to the Corinthians. The mind of God is the mind of Christ. The spiritual man is the man made spiritual by Christ, through His work and merit. The Apostle seems to intimate in chapter ii. 13, where he speaks of himself as employing words which have been taught him by the Holy Ghost, that it was not only an inward teaching which gave him power and authority as an apostle, but an inspiration which directed him how to express the thoughts which were suggested to him. The manner of that teaching he does not explain, and he certainly did not intend to claim a mechanical verbal inspiration. But he disclaimed any subjection to human systems and methods of speech. "*Man's wisdom*" taught in accordance with man's knowledge; but the technical phraseology of human systems has been, and still is, a great hindrance to spiritual advancement. Nowhere was it more important than at Corinth that the Apostle should claim on behalf of the Gospel and its proclamation an entire freedom from all restraints of language and all prejudices of traditional or conventional thought.

The Corinthians, when the Apostle Paul came among them, were babes in Christ. They were not without the Spirit, but they were scarcely to be called spiritual;

rather they were *σαρκικοί*, fleshly, under the dominion of the spirit of this world and its modes of thought and language. Yet the foundation was laid and the building was carried on in that people, and it was not the men who laboured amongst them, such as Paul and Apollos, who made them what they were, but their faith was divinely given and divinely sustained. "*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.*" He is referring to the indwelling of the Spirit in the community of believers, which, of course, includes the doctrine of the indwelling of the Spirit in the individual. But the warnings which he gives against defiling or corrupting the temple of God undoubtedly refer to false teaching in the Church, and therefore we may rightly say that in the Apostle's view, the indwelling of the Spirit in the Church is a higher and more solemn thing than the indwelling of the Spirit in the individual. "*All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.*" Such words must be intended to lift up the minds of the Corinthians from individualism to the privilege and responsibility of fellowship. Yet there is no separation of the apostles from the rest of believers in any undue exaltation of the apostolic office. They were simply servants and attendants and stewards of the mysteries of God. They are what they are for the sake of the people of God. All are partakers of the same Spirit. "*Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of our God*" (vi. 11). Very striking is the application of this doctrine of the in-

dwelling Spirit to the purity of life to which Christians are called. “*Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have from God*” (vi. 19). The use of the word *naos*, sanctuary, seems to imply that the Apostle is not laying any stress on the figure, but merely using it in a general sense for sanctity. Your bodies are made sacred by the fact that the Holy Ghost works in them, and manifests Himself through their energies. The researches of modern physiology lead us to a closer and closer identification of the two sides of human nature, the fleshly and the spiritual. Matter itself is now thought out by Science into a reflex of the mind. “*Glorify God in your body*” is a precept which appeals to the inner man, as well as to regulation of the outer life.

The Apostle recognised the existence of the Spirit's gifts at Corinth. “*Every man hath his own gift from God*” (χάρισμα) (vii. 7). He himself had his power to speak and give counsel, because, as he says, “*I think that I also have the Spirit of God*” (vii. 40). In the same sense of inspired guidance the Apostle affirms that the institution of the Lord's Supper which he delivered to the Corinthians was in accordance with that which he had “*received from the Lord*” (παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου). The twelfth chapter is on the very important subject of spiritual gifts. The word *χαρίσματα* is not employed until the fourth verse, but the subject is plainly not the work of the Spirit in general, but the dispensation of gifts, on which it is probable there was some confusion in the minds of the Corinthians. In the *first* place, the Apostle

reminds them that all gifts are subordinate to the truth as it is in Jesus. “*No man speaking in the Spirit of God (i.e., by the gift of tongues), saith Jesus is anathema ; and no man can say Jesus is Lord but in the Holy Spirit*” (xii. 3). *Secondly*, Whatever differences there may be in the manifestations of spiritual gifts, they are *one* because the Spirit is *one*. “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministration, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal.” This unity of the Spirit was a rebuke to those who sought to take their gifts and use them for their own personal advancement or to the division of the Church. All spiritual men would be known by their humility and brotherly behaviour. *Thirdly*, The Apostle, without giving anything that could be called a complete catalogue of the spiritual gifts of the early Church, mentions a variety, apparently just as they occurred to him. “To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ; to another, the word of knowledge (γνῶσις) by the same Spirit. To another, faith by the same Spirit ; to another, the gifts of healings, by or in the same Spirit ; to another, the working of miracles (ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων) ; to another, prophecy ; to another, the discerning of spirits ; to another, divers kinds of tongues ; to another, the interpretation of tongues ; but all these worketh (energises) the one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He wills” (xii. 8–11). The enumeration in the twenty-eighth verse



is not so full, but is intended perhaps to correspond more closely with the official distinctions of the Church. "But God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles, the gifts of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues;" and the thirtieth verse adds, interpretation of tongues (viii. 28, 30). The fourteenth chapter leaves us in no doubt that the Apostle regarded such spiritual gifts as signs and helps to the Church, but not as in any way necessary to personal salvation. He himself spake with tongues more than they all, but all such powers were nothing as compared with preaching the Gospel and edifying the Church. "Desire to prophecy (or preach), and do not forbid to speak with tongues, but let all things be done decently and in order." The unity of the body with the diversity of the members rested upon the unity of the Spirit, not upon any mere external organisation; not upon any supremacy of apostles or subjection of laity to clergy, such as was afterwards made the ground of order in the second and third centuries, but upon the fact that the baptism whereby Christians are introduced into the Church is a true spiritual baptism, not a mere form or rite. "*For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and we were all made to drink into (or of) one Spirit*" (xii. 13).

The great doctrine of the resurrection and the future life, which is so grandly set forth in the fifteenth chapter, is but a development of the fundamental fact of the Christian life, the baptism by the Spirit into the unity of Christ.

What He is we are. His Resurrection is our resurrection. He is the last Adam, a perfect man, who is a quickening Spirit, that is, Christ. The Holy Spirit energises in the believer unto eternal life. The natural body precedes the spiritual body, or body filled with the Spirit; the natural man precedes the spiritual man, even as Adam precedes Christ. "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." It is in view of the doctrine of the Spirit as it is taught all through the Scripture that such language becomes the language of a definite expectation which the whole experience of the Christian man prepares him to cherish. True spiritual life is a progressive emancipation from the bondage of fleshly corruption—a victory over nature and putting on of immortality.

Neander has pointed out ("History of the Planting of Christianity," Bohn, vol. i. p. 133, &c.) that the gifts of the Spirit varied according to the natural predispositions and aptitudes of individuals. In some cases, those who were prepared by early cultivation and faculty became by the gift of the Spirit "*Teachers*," being possessed of Christian knowledge. In other cases, prophecy was bestowed, the prophet being suddenly carried away by the power of inspiration seizing him, an instantaneous elevation of his higher self-consciousness, according to a light that then gleamed upon him (*ἀποκάλυψις*). These two charisms were not always found separate in different persons. In the case of the speaking with tongues, what was uttered was not a connected address, nor an exhortation like that of the prophets, but the

soul of the person speaking was absorbed in devotion and adoration. Hence, prayer, singing the praises of God, testifying the mighty acts of God, were suited to this state. The Spirit also gave to some a productiveness of religious intuition by which they were enabled to explain or pass judgment upon what others communicated by means of their charism. The division of teaching was distinguished into the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom, that is, an ability to develop the truth in its theoretic elements, or in its application to the various relations of life. So when we pass from the ministry of the Word, to which all such gifts referred, and think of other forms of outward activity, there were some gifts that heightened and sanctified natural qualities, such as gifts of administration, alms distribution, tending the sick; and others, such as, performing miracles and cures. These latter, Neander thinks, were intended under the word "*Faith*" ("if I had faith, so that I could remove mountains") (chap. xiii. 2). It is not of the very highest importance to us in these days to be able to distinguish accurately every difference in the manifestation of the Spirit in the days of the apostles. The one great fact is beyond dispute, that there was a widespread inspiration, and that the special manifestations of spiritual energy were understood to be imparted to the Church for the common good of the Church, and for the advancement of the Saviour's Kingdom. They were not confounded with the work of the Spirit in personal salvation. The Corinthians "were behind in no gift," but it is evident that the sanctifica-

tion of the Corinthian Church was very far from complete.

In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians the doctrine of the Spirit is not so largely dwelt upon, but is still very clearly before the Apostle's mind. The unction, or special consecration, which the Apostle claimed, he evidently regarded as part of that universal inspiration of the people of God which was the characteristic of the dispensation of grace. "*He which establisheth us with you in (or into) Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.*" That is, it is the same God who has put us all alike in a firm position in the Saviour, who has anointed us apostles with the special inspiration bestowed upon us. "*Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest (or pledge) of the Spirit in our hearts*" (chap. i. 21, 22). We can appeal to the signs of the Spirit as the seals of our confidence. In the same way the Apostle makes his appeal to the work of the Spirit in the Corinthians themselves as the letter of commendation which affirmed his ministry: "Ye are manifestly an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart" (chap. iii. 3). "*The letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life.*" Therefore the true ministers are not ministers of the letter, but of the Spirit; that is, they are not satisfied with a mere impartation of the letter of Scripture. They cannot rest until the Spirit Himself writes the word on the heart and life. The Gospel is a spiritual power. And the Spirit is one with the Saviour. What the Spirit

gives to us is Christ. He fashions us after the image of Jesus, and glorifies us with Divine glory. “*Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit*” (Revised Version), (chap. iii. 17, 18). This identification of the Spirit with the Lord is striking. But it is only right to acknowledge that the immediate reference is to the manifestation of the Spirit, not to His personal existence. The Apostle evidently means, Christ’s new law is engrafted in our hearts by the Spirit’s work, even as it was promised that the law of Moses should be written by the Spirit on the hearts of the people of Israel. The work of the Spirit is not only moral and in the character and affections, but it is also on the whole of humanity. So when the Apostle is inviting his brethren at Corinth to rejoice with him in the expectation of future victory and glory, he speaks of “the house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens, with which we shall be clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life.” The work is a Divine work, and the Spirit of God gives us the earnest of it in our present experience. “*Now He that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit*” (chap. v. 5). The man who is “*in Christ is a new creature*” (or creation) (chap. v. 17). This is the Grace of God, to which ministers of Christ testify “by the Holy Ghost” (chap. vi. 6). Those who receive such grace are the Temple of the living God,

and by the power of the Spirit they “ cleanse themselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God ” (chap. vii. 1). The Apostle invites his fellow-believers to be fellow-soldiers in the great conflict which has to be waged, not with flesh and blood, but with the strongholds of Satan and the thoughts of men: “ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ ” (chap. x. 5). The testimony from personal experience given in the twelfth chapter shows that, as the Apostle intimated in his First Epistle, no one could claim more and higher signs of the Spirit of God than he himself. He could refer “ *to visions and revelations of the Lord.* ” Though he does not write them down as the Apostle John was commanded to do, we cannot doubt that they were to himself as certainly Divine visitations as those which were given to the Seer of Patmos. “ *Whether in the body or out of the body* he could not tell,” for he was in an ecstasy. He was “ *caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter* ” (chap. xii. 4). The Epistle closes with a doxology, in which all the Three Persons of the Trinity are introduced; and thus early the form of benediction was stamped with apostolic authority: “ *The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all* ” (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

The Epistle to the Romans is very clearly a theological manifesto, if the term may be allowed, by which the

Apostle desired to prepare the way for the exercise of his ministry at the world's great centre, and where he fore-saw his influence as a Christian teacher would be greater than it had ever been before. It is important to keep in mind this cosmopolitan character of the Epistle, because those which followed it, and which are called the Epistles of the Captivity, written from Rome, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and the Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus, have an element in them which seems due to the influence of Rome upon the Apostle's thoughts. The full exposition of his theology takes its natural place between the more practical Epistles to the young Churches in Macedonia and Galatia and Corinth, and those which seem to be written to counteract the growth of false doctrine and schism in the Churches, and promote the stability of the Catholic Church of Christ. The opening words of the Epistle to the Romans prepares us for the large scope of that which follows. We are reminded at once that the Gospel which the Apostle claimed to represent (being divinely consecrated, separated, to be its herald), was no mere opinion or phase of thought, but the same Divine message which, as a golden thread, holds all the Scriptures together. The Lord Jesus Christ is the centre of that Gospel, and the proofs of His Divine authority are threefold: He was "*declared*" or determined (ὁρισθέντος) "*to be the Son of God with power*" (ἐν δυνάμει), i.e., with miracles, "*according to the Spirit of Holiness,*" that is, by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit resting upon Him in its fulness, "*by the resurrection from the dead,*" by the great cardinal fact of His

Resurrection, which included, of course, His Ascension to Heaven. The expression "*Spirit of Holiness*" is remarkable. We cannot doubt that the Personal Spirit is intended; but perhaps the Apostle meant to call attention to the fact that the spiritual glory of the Saviour bore witness to Him in addition to His miracles. The first part of the Epistle, which deals with the doctrine of sin and the condemnation of man as an offender against the law of God, scarcely suggests the subject of the Spirit's work; but it is implied in the doctrine of obedience which is set forth. The mere external Judaism is worthless. "*He is a Jew* (that is, a child of God in true covenant relation with Jehovah) *who is one inwardly* (ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ), *and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God*" (Rom. ii. 29). The doctrine of Grace, which the Apostle felt was the very foundation on which a universal Church must be built, is the doctrine of the Spirit. The Gentiles believe, and their faith is to them what obedience to the law is to the Jew. In every case it is the work of the Spirit in the heart which gives us acceptance through Christ. In the fifth chapter it is clearly taught that the *free gift, the grace of God, the gift by grace, by one man Jesus Christ*, is the essence of the salvation proclaimed in the Gospel; and that free gift, as the Apostle goes on to show, is at the same time justification and sanctification, the forensic righteousness which places man in the position of acceptance with the righteous God, and the personal righteousness which is the work of the Spirit in the heart and life of the believer. It is



“*justification of life.*” In the sixth chapter, the resurrection is employed to illustrate the great doctrine of the new life in Christ. We were baptized into His death, therefore we were baptized into His Resurrection. The newness of life is spiritual. “*We are alive unto God*” (*i.e.*, by Divine life bestowed upon us), “through Jesus Christ our Lord” (chap. vi. 11). The seventh chapter carries forward the thought of personal sanctification to the point where the doctrine of emancipation from fleshly bondage and introduction into spiritual liberty is enounced in all its fulness. The only result of the conflict which is waged between the conscience and the individual heart and life, apart from the Grace of God, is misery, condemnation, and captivity. We are bound as it were to a dead body which is full of corruption, and we long for deliverance from it. There can be no deliverance but that which not only sets us free from the condemnation of sin, but makes our whole nature afresh. So while the doctrine of the Spirit seems to be held in reserve all through the first seven chapters of the Epistle, it comes forth with emphatic decision and ample expression in the sublime language of the eighth chapter, which is a kind of climax in the Apostle’s exposition. The language of the first verse is a help to recognise this arrangement. The subject of condemnation is complete. “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*” That is the summary of what has preceded. But there is another aspect of man’s acceptance with God, of salvation, which has yet to be considered. The Law of Death being satisfied, is there a Law of Life

which is substituted? The sinner escaping from the judgment of God, is he able to look forward to a glorious future? Here again, the Apostle seems to say, we must not be casting about at random, laying hold of straws; we want a "sure and certain hope." We must have a Law of Life to depend upon. That law is the Law of the Spirit: "*For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus made us free from the law of sin and death.*" The one law took the place of the other. The creature was lifted up into a new sphere of energy and development. Hence it is "*that the Righteousness (or ordinance) of the Law (i.e., of the moral law) might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*" This introduces a subject which the Apostle feels requires further exposition. What is walking after the flesh and walking after the Spirit? He has already virtually answered the question in the seventh chapter. The mind is the root of the life—the *φρόνημα*. It is evident that, apart from the work and presence within us of the Spirit of God, we are fleshly-minded, that is, though having a mind or conscience which testifies for God, still our thoughts and the inner life of the man are under the control of the flesh and the law of our members. When the Spirit of God takes possession of us, there is a new order of our thoughts, and so of our life. The Spirit rules, sits on the throne of our mind and heart and will, and the result is life and peace, progressive development of the higher humanity, and joyful fellowship with God. "*They that are after the Spirit (κατὰ Πνεῦμα) mind (φρονοῦσιν) the things of the Spirit*" (chap. viii. 5). "*The mind of the*

*Spirit is life and peace.*" That is, the Spirit works life and peace in our mind. It would be no mystery to any believers who had witnessed the wonderful manifestations of spiritual gifts in the early Church that they were said to be no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit. "*Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.*" Already in the Epistles to the Corinthians the Apostle has called the believers "*spiritual men*" (pneumatici), and now to the Romans he plainly says that the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ is the distinction of Christians. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ. The presence and work of the Divine Spirit is the essence of salvation. He it is that gives us the power to please God. He it is that quickens the new life within us, and maintains it to its full development. The rest of the chapter is an exposition of this great truth. First we have to face the fact that Christians die. Yes, says the Apostle, but it is the body that dies because of sin. "*The Spirit is life because of righteousness,*" i.e., because spiritually we live a new life, which through Christ is righteous before God. This is because of our vital union with the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, the quickening Spirit, as the Apostle set forth to the Corinthians. "*But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you.*" Death is a fleshly fact. Spiritual life must

embrace both body and soul. Our bodies are "the temples of the Holy Ghost." It is impossible that the Law of Life should be overcome by the Law of Death. The sin which works death is overcome and cast out by the Spirit. The new body is a spiritual body, not a fleshly body, *i.e.*, a body full of the Spirit of God. "*If we by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live.*" The reign of the Divine life within us is a purification of the flesh as well as of the mind. Both individually and in humanity at large, the influence of godliness is to put strength and peace into all the nature. Hence we may truly say, that as Jesus was the Son of God, those who receive His Spirit and are led by it are, like Him, "*sons of God.*" "*For as many as are led (ἄγονται) by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*" It is more than the leading of an example; it is more than the leading of an influence; it is the working of a nature within us—we are born again sons of God. And the Apostle appeals to the testimony of experience to confirm this marvellous change and exaltation. "*For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*" (chap. viii. 14-17). The sonship includes the heirship. The creature waits for the manifestation of the Divine sonship. We have the "*first fruits of the Spirit,*" therefore we have hope. "*The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities,*" for "*He maketh intercession*

*for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*" "The mind of the Spirit," of which the Apostle has previously spoken, is the mind of God. Whatever the Spirit does, He does "*according to the will of God.*" The life which we live as sons of God is God's own life, and leads to His glory. Union with Christ, moral identification with Him, is the ground of our confidence. "*Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" There is no wonder that, with such a doctrine of the Spirit before him, the Apostle called upon all the Church of Christ to rise to the fulness of their common privileges. We have gifts differing according to the grace that is given us. Gifts of the Spirit make us prophets, ministers, teachers, exhorters, givers, rulers, philanthropists. The fellowship of the Church is the fellowship of the Spirit, and such a fellowship will keep us from being conformed to this world, and will transform us in the renewing of our mind. We shall "*put on*" not the common imperfect humanity of the world, but "*the Lord Jesus Christ.*" We are members of His Kingdom, and the realisation of that Kingdom is the law of our life. "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The Apostle concludes his Epistle by calling his brethren at Rome to acknowledge with him the expansion of the Kingdom of God over the whole world. It is the Catholic Church which is before his eyes—not the Jewish or any other narrow limitation of it. "The offering of the Gentiles is acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." No

one can doubt it when they remember "the mighty signs and wonders wrought by the power of the Spirit of God," "from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum." He beseeches his brethren, "for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and by the love of the Spirit," that "they strive together with him in their prayers to God for him." And he leaves them in the midst of a crowd of salutations, with the full expectation that the "God of peace shall bruise Satan under their feet shortly," praying for the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be with them all, and that this Gospel, which he has thus expounded, and which is the mystery kept secret since the world began, but now revealed, which, as he said at the beginning, and repeats at the conclusion of his Epistle, binds together all the Scriptures—may be "made known to all the nations unto the obedience of faith;" and in view of such a consummation he ascribes "to God, the only wise, glory through Jesus Christ for ever."

The Epistle which the Apostle sent to the Philippians, "to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons," has in it more of the *personal* element than any other, because it was intended to allay the fears of those who were warmly attached to their great teacher and deeply concerned for his safety at Rome. We should scarcely expect to find much in such a letter on the doctrine of the Spirit, but we can see that the Apostle depends upon special spiritual strength, "*the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*" (chap. i. 10), in answer to his own and his brethren's prayers. The union and brotherly love and mutual consideration

which he commends to the Philippians is "*fellowship of the Spirit*" (chap. ii. 1), and the work which he enjoins upon them as a "*working out*" of their salvation, he reminds them is a work carried on in union with a Divine energy which is within them as sons of God. "For it is God who energises in you both to will and to work of His good pleasure" (chap. ii. 13). The worship which those who rejoice in the Lord Jesus render to God is worship "*in the Spirit*" (chap. iii. 3), for they have no confidence in the flesh, *i.e.*, in mere external obedience. Their citizenship is in Heaven, and their life is life in the Lord Jesus, "*Who is able to subdue all things unto Himself*" (chap. iii. 21).

The two Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians must have been written about the same time, and evidently express a state of mind in the writer somewhat different from what is apparent in previous writings. The personal element is not entirely absent, but it is subordinate. The ruling thought in the Apostle's mind seems to be the future development of the Christian Church; the unity and steadfastness of the people of God; the purity of faith and the increase of gifts and graces; and the glory of the Kingdom of God. Perhaps the experience of the prisoner at Rome had led him to the deeper study of the relation between the Church and the world. He saw what the kingdom of this world was, at its centre and in its climax of false glory, by which he was not deceived, but knew it to be sham. Like Augustine in the fifth century, he saw the true "*City of God*" over against the "*Mother of Harlots*," the Babylon which

corrupted the world and persecuted the saints. He began to recognise more distinctly the battle which Truth would have to wage with error in the false philosophies, which Christians would be tempted to mingle with the Truth of Christ. With such themes before his mind, the Apostle must have felt both his own and his brethren's need of the spiritual guidance and inspiration of which he had so often spoken. It is the first and last thought with him; it is the ground of his confidence and expectation. The first words which he writes to the Ephesian Christians invites them to rejoice in the Spiritual Kingdom of which they are members. "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ*" (Eph. i. 3). After ye believed in Christ, "*ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (i.e., Who was promised), which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of His glory*" (chap. i. 13, 14). The quickening which is so prominently set forth in the second chapter is the work of the Spirit. It is not only a quickening of those who were dead in trespasses and sins to a new life, but a lifting up of that life to heavenly places in Christ Jesus, where we sit with Him on His throne; and that not in individuals alone, but in the development of the body of Christ in the ages to come. We are God's workmanship, "*created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.*" The new humanity, the new world, the new morality and the new society, were all included in the



new creation, which is the work of the Spirit. In view of such a Divine renovation of man, the distinction of Jews and Gentiles falls entirely away. Both are reconciled to God by the one great sacrifice of the Cross; both are absorbed into the "*one new man*" (chap. ii. 15). "*For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.*" There is one Spirit at work in all the varieties of men. His manifestations are one, though manifold; and the blessed result is a family life in humanity, such as the world has never seen before. One Father, one beloved Son, and all mankind united by one Spirit. "*Strangers!*" "*Foreigners!*" Such names henceforth are unknown. There is but one City of God, one Household of God. It is built upon one foundation, even that which apostles and prophets have testified, and of which Jesus Christ Himself is the chief corner-stone. "*In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy Temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit*" (chap. ii. 21-22, Revised Version). This is the doctrine which the Apostle has taught in all his writings, that the Church of Christ is filled with the Spirit, and therefore, as such, is holy to the Lord as a consecrated temple. But such a doctrine of universal inspiration is quite consistent with the claim which apostles made to be the channels of special Divine communication. "You have heard," he says, "of the dispensation of the Grace of God given to me," Paul. By revelation He made known to me the mystery, not made known in other ages, "*now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit*"

(chap. iii. 5). The Gospel of which the Apostle was made a minister was the Gospel of a universal grace. "*The gift of the grace of God was given unto me by (or according to) the effectual working of His power*" (chap. iii. 7). That is, I claim to have received in an especial degree the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The Apostle prays for his brethren and for all Christians, that they may be "strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man," and, as the result of that inward supply of spiritual strength, that they may be "able (strong) to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length, and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God." This is the work of the power that worketh in us and in the Church throughout all ages unto the glory of God.

The Apostle felt the importance of placing this doctrine of spiritual power upon a right basis. He foresaw that the variety of gifts and graces in the Church might lead to divisions and dissensions. He called upon his brethren to cherish the lowliness of mind and brotherliness of feeling which would alone become such a vocation, by which they were lifted above the world, "*giving diligence to keep the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace.*" There is "*One Spirit, and one body*" in which the Spirit dwells. This unity of Spirit and unity of body is quite consistent with the manifoldness of the Spirit's gifts. "*Unto each one of us was given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave*

*gifts unto men. (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the Heavens, that He might fill all things).*" The fullness and sufficiency being thus affirmed by the glorious work of Christ, the next point is to place beside that ideal infinitude of gifts the facts of the Christian life. In the body of Christ there must be *variety*, otherwise it is not a body; but there must be *unity*, otherwise there is no incorporation. The whole doctrine is practically taught in the view of Church life which the Apostle gives us. He is not describing that life exhaustively; he is not giving any stereotyped form for all future time. He is pointing to the fact that the Saviour gave His gifts to the early Church, not to divide them, but to unite them; not to plant each one in an independent position, but to give each one a place where he may "*grow up in all things into the Head, even Christ.*" Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, however we describe the gifted ones, their gifts are all for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministering, for the building up of the body of Christ, "*till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*" (iv. 13). In view of the temptation to which we are all exposed, to yield to the influences of this world, we should seek to be "*renewed in the Spirit of the mind,*" putting on "*the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth*" (iv. 24). Well may

the Apostle, after calling upon his brethren to accept such a doctrine, beseech them to walk worthy of it, and not to "*grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom they were sealed unto the day of Redemption.*" Those who are living a spiritual life will bring forth spiritual fruits and walk as children of light. "The fruit of the Spirit (or of light) is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." The joy and elevation which they will seek after will not be the excitement of earthly pleasures and revellings, but they will seek to be "*filled with the Spirit's*" inspiration, which will break forth into "*psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.*" They have a warfare to wage, but they have an armour of God in which they can be clothed. They are weak in themselves, but they wield "*the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*" (vi. 17). Their prayers, their supplications, are "*in the Spirit,*" and they obtain the blessings of the Spirit. Such teaching was adapted to all alike, and would lift them above themselves. It was exactly what was wanted. It has enriched the Church of God in every age.

The Epistle to the Colossians brings before us more distinctly than that to the Ephesians the spiritual dangers of the early Church. The Apostle prays for his brethren that they might be not only filled with "*love in the Spirit,*" which Epaphras declared to him they were already, but with "*knowledge of the Will of God, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*" (Col. i. 9). The deliverance which God has given us in Christ is a translation from the "kingdom and power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son" (i. 13). Again

the special Grace given to the Apostle is clearly announced, and in very similar language to that employed to the Ephesians; but it is not for his own sake that he speaks, but that he may "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (i. 28). The Colossians were surrounded by deceiving and corrupting influences in the false philosophies which were beginning to mingle their darkness with the light of Christian Truth. He calls upon his brethren to watch against all such deceits, by which they might be robbed of their faith. "*In Christ are laid up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*" (chap. ii. 3). All they wanted was to be "*complete in Him*" (chap. ii. 10). The "new man" is "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." "Christ is all and in all" (chap. iii. 10, 11). Jew or Greek, circumcision or uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, the true spiritual life will manifest itself, in the same reflection of the glory of the Saviour's image. Husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, everything will be in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and the endless variety of their life will be blended into the unity of a Divine family on which the Father's love is ever resting.

It is an interesting application of these apostolic teachings which we read in the Epistle to Philemon. The prisoner of the Lord could see in a fugitive slave one who was made free with the freedom of the Spirit. That spiritual citizenship which the Apostle claimed for Onesimus was the root of all civil liberty, and, as it was held up before the world by the Church of Christ,

destroyed the slavery and tyranny of the kingdom of darkness.

The Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus were certainly among the latest of the Apostle's writings. They were written to those to whom he had assigned special duties as his representatives. They were undoubtedly intended to convey the mind of the Spirit, as he understood it, on the order of Church life. Into the difficult questions which arise out of them on matters of Church government this is not the place to enter; but it is of great importance, in view of such a subject as the Christian ministry, which is more or less dealt with in these Epistles, to consider what is the Apostle's teaching in these last Epistles on the doctrine of the Spirit.

The claim which the Apostle puts forth in his First Epistle to Timothy is, to be regarded as a divinely-appointed "herald and apostle and teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth." What he is, he is "by the commandment of God our Saviour and Christ Jesus our hope." He committed a charge (*παράγγελίαν*) to his son Timothy, that he might charge others with regard to their teaching. He writes that the young minister might know how he ought (or how men ought) to behave themselves in the house of God, the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth. The mystery of godliness is, that "*He who was manifested in the flesh was justified in the Spirit*" (that is, by the power or manifestation of the Spirit). To that Spirit and His testimony the Apostle appeals. He has especially foretold that there shall be a falling off in the latter times. We must be

prepared for that apostasy. The representative of the Apostle, if he should be called to ordain, must "*lay hands suddenly on no man.*" This is the only allusion in the Epistle to any ceremony of ordination, and we are not warranted by it in concluding that Timothy was in any sense a depository of the Holy Ghost. The gifts were free. The Church itself held them in trust for God.

The Second Epistle to Timothy was evidently written very shortly before the Apostle's martyrdom, and with death in his view. He desired to prepare the young man for the trials and responsibilities of his ministry. "*I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God (τὸ χάρισμα) which is in thee through the laying on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fearfulness, but of power and love and discipline*" (σωφρονισμοῦ). There is no doubt that, as the Apostle had the power of bestowing the special gifts of the Spirit, he had exercised that power on behalf of Timothy. The reference to power may be to miracles. Many besides apostles were gifted with miraculous powers; probably Timothy among them. Notwithstanding that this Epistle is the Apostle's last word, there is nothing said in it about apostolical succession, or anything by which it can be supported; the directions given are of a practical kind, such as might be given to any minister of Christ who would be called not only to preach, but to superintend the efforts of others in preaching and teaching. There is no assumption on the Apostle's part. There is no encouragement to Timothy to assume a superiority over his brethren. "*Commit the doctrine to faithful men.*" That is the sum and substance

of all the counsel given. It might be given to any pastor in regulating the appointment of Sunday-school teachers, or to any one who has influence in sending out lay preachers or young ministers. The word *παράθου*, commit, cannot be stretched to mean ordination. It refers simply and solely to the faithful exercise of his ministry in teaching. We commit or intrust the Word to those to whom we preach it, and especially to those who can confer special instruction.

In the Epistle to Titus there is more direct reference to the ordination of elders. Titus was left in Crete, "*to set in order the things which were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge.*" But the word *ordain* is not used. The appointment may have been merely the carrying out of the Apostle's own arrangements or the express wishes of the people. If the Apostle Paul had intended to put into the Pastoral Epistles the details of a specific form of Church government, he would surely have written much more fully and clearly. The only direct allusion to the work of the Holy Spirit is in chap. iii. 5, where we are said to be saved "*through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly (or poured upon us richly) through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*" The laver or washing is here plainly a mere figure of speech to denote baptism, and the water is ignored because the Spirit is the power which renews. This is a mode of expression quite in accordance with that used by our Lord to Nicodemus, "born of water and the Spirit." The Regeneration is real, not formal; spiritual, not mate-



rial; through Jesus Christ, not through the hands of fellow-men.

Thus the testimony of the Apostle Paul is throughout consistent; nor is there one word in his writings which is out of harmony with what we find in the Gospels and Acts, and which, as we have seen, is the doctrine of the Bible as a whole.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is best treated as independent of the Apostle Paul, although the ancient tradition of the Christian Church, which attaches his name to it, is evidence that it has been regarded by a multitude of good men as likely to have come from the Apostle's hand, and teaching the same doctrine which he taught. No other apostle's name can be identified with it. It is manifestly an inspired book, and it breathes an apostolic spirit. The opening words furnish us with the keynote of the whole Epistle. It is written to confirm the faith of the Hebrews; it dwells most on the continuity of revelation and the fulfilment of the Law in the Gospel. "God, who has spoken in past ages, *πολυμέρως καὶ πολυτρόπως*, by divers portions and in divers manners, hath in these latter days spoken unto us in His Son." It was natural that the writer should take for granted, in speaking to readers of the Old Testament, the inspiration of those who spake to the fathers. The work of the Spirit in inspiring the Scriptures is clearly recognised. God has borne witness to the Gospel, as He bore witness to our fathers, "with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles (or manifold powers), and by gifts of the Holy Ghost, according

to His own will" (chap. ii. 4). The language of the Psalms is quoted as the language of the Spirit. "*As the Holy Ghost saith*" (chap. iii. 7); *cf.* chap. iv. 7. "*The Word of God*" is spoken of as a personal power, 'quick (living) and powerful (*ἐνεργῆς*), and sharper than any two-edged sword." All creatures are manifest *in His sight* (*ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ*). With Him we have to do as a living being, and all things are naked and opened unto His eyes. Such a representation can scarcely be said to be a direct reference to the doctrine of the Logos, but rather to the Old Testament impersonation of Divine Wisdom, and therefore to the Spirit as the teacher and guide of men. In the sixth chapter, where the writer is exhorting to perseverance and progress, he speaks of the gifts of the Spirit as the sign of enlightenment. Those who are in extreme danger by apostasy, are those who have been "*enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost,*" *i.e.*, have received the powers which were conferred on the first disciples to speak with tongues and work miracles. Such signs might be given, as the Apostle Paul implies in 1 Cor. xii., without the heart being savingly renewed, and without charity being the abiding possession of the soul. The new covenant which God made with His people is the promise that He will "put His laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts" (chap. ix. 10), that is, as was prophesied through Joel, a universal inspiration instead of one within narrow limits. The meaning of Scripture is said to be the mind of the Spirit, "*the Holy*

*Ghost this signifying*" (chap. ix. 8). Jesus Christ, as our High Priest, offered Himself without spot *through the Eternal Spirit, i.e.,* being filled with the Holy Ghost, He was spotless, and therefore was able to cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God (chap. ix. 14). "*The Holy Ghost is a witness to us*" by the Scripture (chap. x. 15), and we cannot doubt that it is the work of the Spirit by which our "*hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water,*" *i.e.,* it is the Spirit's baptism which makes the water-baptism real and efficacious. One who forsakes the Gospel treads under foot the Son of God, counts the blood of the New Covenant an unholy thing, and does despite (insults) unto "*the Spirit of Grace*" (τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος). Our Father in Heaven is called "*the Father of spirits,*" and "*the spirits of just men made perfect*" are among the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. These are but very scanty references to so great a doctrine, but it must be remembered that the writer was not addressing himself to those who had been brought up in the darkness of Heathenism, but to those who were perfectly familiar with the language of the Old Testament Scriptures, in which the doctrine of the Spirit was incorporated. The comparative silence of this Epistle to the Hebrews is itself a powerful testimony to the fact that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit among the early Christians was substantially the same as that accepted by God's people in every age.

The Apostle Peter was the Apostle of the Circumcision; he wrote to the Dispersion, that is, to Jewish believers

scattered throughout Asia Minor. He is another witness to the faith of his people. They are addressed as believers in the Holy Ghost. In the First Epistle they are called elect "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, *in sanctification of the Spirit*" (chap. i. 2). They are "*begotten again*" to the Hope of the Gospel, *i.e.*, by the Spirit (chap. i. 3). They are "*kept by the power of God through faith*" (chap. i. 5). The Spirit which spoke in the prophets is the "*Spirit of Christ*" (chap. i. 11). The preachers of the Gospel, preached "*with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven*" (chap. i. 12), an evident allusion to the Day of Pentecost. They themselves, believing, are "*built up a spiritual house*" (*οἶκος πνευματικός*), a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (chap. ii. 4). Jesus Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit" (chap. iii. 18). "*In which also* (that is, in the Spirit) *He went and preached unto the spirits in prison*" (chap. iii. 19). "*For this cause also was the Gospel preached unto* (them that are) *the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit*" (chap. iv. 6). Again we notice that the allusions to the doctrine of the Spirit are few and indirect, and those addressed are supposed to be familiar with it.

The Second Epistle of St. Peter is not immediately addressed to Jews, but "to those who have obtained like precious faith with us;" probably therefore to Gentiles. They are "*partakers of the Divine nature*" (*θείας φύσεως*), an evident allusion to spiritual regeneration. The pro-

phets are not spoken of as they would have been had the Apostle been writing solely to Jews, but their inspiration is distinctly affirmed. “*No prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost*” (φερόμενοι), (chap. i. 21). There were false prophets then, there are false prophets now. The Epistle is put upon the same level with the Old Testament Scriptures (chap. iii. 2), and the writings of the Apostle Paul are said to be wrested by the perversity of unlearned and unstable men, as are also “*the other scriptures*” (τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς). This Epistle was much disputed in the early Church. If it was not the Apostle Peter’s, it is a testimony to his doctrine and to the general acceptance in the Church of the inspiration of the Apostle’s writings, and the early formation of a canon.

There remain now only the writings of the Apostle John and the short Epistle of Jude to complete our review of the Scripture testimony to the Spirit.

Jude describes himself as a “*servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James* ;” it was probably therefore after James’s death that his Epistle was written, and it is supposed by many eminent writers that it was published as late as 72 or 73 A.D. ; therefore between the writings of Peter and Paul and those of John. The very first words show that Jude believed in the work of the Spirit, for he writes to “*them that are sanctified*.” It is against the false prophets that he warns his brethren, and their falsity is proved by their “*making separations* (or, as some would read, separating God from the Creator), *being*

*sensual* (ψυχικοὶ), *having not the Spirit.*" The reference must be to their professing to speak under inspiration, but not really speaking by the Spirit of God. The true believers build themselves up in their holy faith, "*praying in the Holy Ghost.*" Their spiritual life is spiritually sustained, and they will be presented by God "*faultless before the presence of His glory.*"

The last voice of the Bible is the voice of the beloved disciple. His testimony is no uncertain one on the doctrine of the Spirit. It was probably given late in the first century, and is therefore all the more valuable to us, proving that, as the Church of Christ obtained more experience, it was confirmed in its faith, and that faith was less and less taken from doubtful appearances. There is no extravagance, no fanaticism, no appeal to extraordinary manifestations, no dependence upon ecstasies or superabundant miracles in the Apostle John; all is calm, strong, pure, heavenly, like the Spirit of Christ Himself.

The First Epistle of John begins with the claim he could so well sustain to be the witness of the manifested life of The Word, and to show that eternal life to others. Although the Spirit is not mentioned in setting forth this claim, it is implied. "Our fellowship," says the Apostle, "is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. We have a message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you." No one who wrote in the first century would express himself in such a manner unless he had meant to claim special Divine inspiration. It is somewhat remarkable that the same Apostle who

records the discourse of Jesus in which He calls the Holy Spirit the "*Paraclete*," should employ the same word of the Saviour Himself: "*We have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*" (chap. ii. 1). But plainly the word is susceptible of both meanings, for it is literally "*Helper*," whether in advocating a cause or in comforting and guiding the weak and suffering. The claim of inspiration is not inconsistent in the eyes of the Apostle John with gracious guidance given to all God's children: "Ye have an unction (chrism) from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the Truth, but because ye know it, and because no lie is of the Truth. The anointing which ye have received from Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as His anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in Him." Of course the Apostle could not mean that the brethren to whom he wrote had perfect knowledge, and therefore needed to learn nothing, but he did mean that, in so far as their safety from being seduced into error was concerned, if they threw themselves upon the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, they would be as certainly protected as any words of an apostle could protect them. Some have founded upon this text a claim to individual inspiration, which has led them to despise or undervalue the teaching of Scripture. But they certainly altogether misunderstand the Apostle's intention. The claim to private inspiration separates us from the Church of Christ and from the fellowship of brethren by an assumption of

superior knowledge. The Apostle is disclaiming that for himself, and calling upon his brethren to depend, not upon private inspiration, but upon the anointing which was upon them as a Church, as a fellowship. He speaks not to individuals in their isolation, but to the Church of Christ in its unity and in its communion. This is the explanation of the very lofty tone in which the Apostle speaks of our sonship and purity. Ideally, we are free from sin because we are partakers of the Holy Ghost; and therefore all sin is falling away from our position as Christians. We are "*born of God*," the seed of the Divine grace remains in us, and the manifestation of the Divine nature is in righteousness, not in sin. "*In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.*" That the Apostle has in his mind the work of the Spirit is very evident from the appeal he makes directly to the "testimony of the Spirit." "*He that keepeth the commandments (of Jesus Christ) dwelleth in Him and He in him; and hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us*" (chap. iii. 24). Then comes the question, how are we to discern the presence and operation of the Spirit of God? The answer seems to be, by the test of faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ. No truly inspired man will contradict the testimony of Christ. Try the spirits; believe not every spirit. Many false prophets are gone out into the world. That was manifest in the latter part of the first century. Already heresy was springing up in the doctrine of the Docetists, and other false doctrines, which were but the beginning of a great apostasy. The Apostle John was



one with the Apostle Paul in anticipating a speedy development of anti-Christian error. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the Antichrist; whereof ye have heard that it cometh: and now it is in the world already" (chap. iv. 1-3); *cf.* 1 Cor. xii. 3; 2 Thess. ii. 7.

"We are of God: he that knoweth God knoweth us; he that is not of God knoweth not us: hereby we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of error" (chap. iv. 6). "Hereby we know that we abide in God and He in us, because He hath given us of His own Spirit" (chap. iv. 13). "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," that is, born of the Spirit. *Jesus came by water and blood: "not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood."* "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the Truth. For these are those who bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three agree in one" (chap. v. 6-8). The general meaning of these remarkable words it is not difficult to see. The Apostle identifies "*the water and the blood*" with Jesus Christ. We may, therefore, understand him to mean the Truth of Salvation objectively regarded as wrought out by Christ in His person and in His work. The *water* may refer to the baptism of the Lord as the commencement of His ministry and mediatorial work on earth; the *blood* may refer to His death and the completion of His work, when He Himself said, "It is finished." *The Spirit* therefore bears witness by

the subjective application of this objective atonement. "A man heeding this witness, suffering himself to be governed by that Spirit who is bearing it to his heart and conscience, acquires an internal righteousness, an energy to do what he ought to do, to be what he ought to be, which a man without the same revelation, without the same assurance of a Divine presence and co-operation, cannot have had. And yet, though this righteousness and life are internal, the same revelation compels a man to declare that they are not his; to attribute all that is good in him to another, with a confidence which no man in the old world can have felt. The Spirit, the water, the blood agree in this testimony; all alike signify to the man that the more inward his purity and regeneration are, the more entirely they must be referred to Christ, not to himself" (Maurice, "Epist. of St. John," p. 247). The Apostle puts the testimony of the Spirit on exactly the same level with the testimony of the Faithful Witness, the Lord Jesus Christ, who "came by water and blood;" and thus he coincides in his teaching with the other apostles. There is no divergencé in the sacred writers. The last of the apostles spoke with the same voice as the Apostle Peter, and all that these faithful witnesses testified was an echo of what the Master Himself said to them as He was leaving them to enter His glory.

The Second and Third Epistles of St. John contain nothing which bears directly on this inquiry. We pass on, therefore, to the Apocalypse, which, whether it were written before or after the Fourth Gospel and the three

Epistles of St. John, naturally concludes the Book of Revelation as a prophetic outlook from the heights of Zion to the future of the Kingdom of God.

We have seen already, in the cases of the Apostles Peter and Paul, that the work of the Spirit included revelations by means of visions. The Apostle Peter was instructed and warned by the vision on the house-top at Joppa, and was delivered from his prejudices and emboldened to take a new departure in his ministry by preaching to Gentiles at Cæsarea. The Apostle Paul tells us that he had "abundance of revelations," and heard words when he was caught up into Paradise which it was not lawful to attempt to put into ordinary language. But such "*revelations*," while blessing the world through the ministry of the men to whom they were vouchsafed, were not in themselves communications to be made public. In the case of the Apostle John it was different. He ministered to a generation when it was peculiarly necessary that faith should be uplifted and supported by a foresight of the Saviour's victories over the world. Antichrist was already at hand. The Apocalypse is a grand testimony against him. The fact that the lonely man in the Isle of Patmos, whether a fugitive fleeing from persecution, or an exile banished by the power of this world, or a voluntary recluse seeking solitude that his eye might be the better opened to heavenly visions, received a "*prophecy*" which might be called "*the revelation of Jesus Christ*," is itself very full of significance. No such "*prophecy*" was ever given before to any man. The prophets of the Old Testament all shrink into the background before this prophet

of the New Testament, as the Old Dispensation waxed old and disappeared in the full daylight of the New. The Apostle invites all the Seven Churches in Asia, representing the whole Catholic Church of Christ, to participate with him in this full outpouring of the Spirit's Grace. "*Grace be unto you, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the Seven Spirits which are before His Throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the Faithful Witness, the First-born of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth*" (chap. i. 4, 5). The Trinity of the Divine Source from which grace flows is here distinctly affirmed. The Spirit is revealed in His sevenfold fulness. In this glorious Divine Person the Apostle for a season was lifted above himself. "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*" (or, as it may be understood, I was by the power of the Spirit taken up into the revelations of the day of the Lord). The Apostle claims to have been not merely a possessor of the Spirit's influence, but completely under His power in an ecstatic state. The words which came to him as from the glorious Redeemer are sent to the Churches. "*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches.*" This appeal to receive the word of the Apostle as the word of Christ through the Spirit is repeated after each separate message to a distinct Church. Thus the sevenfold message is from the sevenfold Spirit, and we are reminded that this last book of the Bible, this book of prophecy, is the outpoured fulness of the Spirit. Again, as the visions begin to be recorded, we are told that they are not human imaginations, but Divine gifts to the world. The voice of

the angel said, "*Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must come to pass hereafter.*" "*And immediately I was in the Spirit*" (chap. iv. 1, 2). Into the visions which follow it is not necessary to enter. They were given by the Spirit; they can be understood only by the inspiration of the same Spirit. The less we look at them in the light of this world, and the more we try to see them in the light which shines from the Bible itself, the more we shall be able to see that they are true visions of God. The Apostle took the little book from the hand of the angel and ate it up, and in his mouth it was sweet as honey, and as soon as he had eaten it his "*belly was made bitter.*" So the visions of the Apocalypse, when they are mingled with merely human thoughts and calculations, produce nothing but bitterness and confusion. But spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. And when we take the prophecies into our hearts and spiritually digest them, we are able to bring them forth again, as the Apostle John was commanded, still larger prophecies, "*before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings*" (chap. x. 11). The two witnesses who shall prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth are said to be "*the two olive trees and the two candlesticks which stand before the Lord of the earth*" (chap. xi. 4), in reference probably to the language of the prophet Zechariah. However we understand the prediction, it is plain that some special manifestation of the Spirit of God is intended. All testimony is from Him. And in this case so special is the testimony, that the witnesses are identified with the

olive-trees and candlesticks, that is, with the oil and the vessel, with the Spirit and the Bride, with the source from which the Light comes, and the Church through which it is conveyed to the world. Probably this is a figurative representation of the twofold testimony of the Jewish and Gentile Church, especially through persecutions and martyrdoms. They were slain and dishonoured, but the Spirit of Life entered into them after three days and a half, and they were received up into Heaven, their earthly testimony being made glorious and eternal. The development and destruction of the great world-power, which opposeth the glory of Christ, is predicted; and in view of such a triumph over the enemy, over the persecutors, no wonder that the Apostle heard "*a voice from Heaven saying unto him, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit (echoing the voice from Heaven), that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow with them*" (chap. xiv. 13). The Spirit of God, in apostles and in the Church, proclaims the blessings from Heaven. But there are other spirits in the world. "Many false prophets are gone forth." And the Apostle saw "three unclean spirits like frogs go out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. For they are spirits of devils, working signs, which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty" (chap. xvi. 13, 14). As in the case of the faithful witnesses, the prophets, so in this case of the false witnesses, the false prophets, the num-

ber may be simply symbolical. The Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet are the threefold representation of the anti-Christian powers, "the world, the flesh, and the devil;" so the spirits which work through them are said to be three. And thus we are reminded that there is a world of spiritual agency on the side of evil, as there is a world of spiritual agency on the side of good. There is a Holy Spirit working amongst the regenerate; there is a spirit of Darkness working amongst the unbelieving and ungodly. It is an important fact that this opposition of a world of spirits to the Spirit of God is brought so distinctly before us in this last book of the Bible; it is implied in the whole teaching of Scripture. Those that have the testimony of Jesus, His "*apostles and prophets*," all who are under the influence of His Spirit, shall rejoice over the fallen enemy and the ruined Babylon. "*The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of the prophecy.*" The meaning of it all is to glorify the Saviour; for the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ. The visions of the apostolic seer are the Gospel in another form. They are not dreams and pictures to wile away an hour. They are a message of special urgency to prepare for the great Day of the Lord; for "blessed are they that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

"*The Spirit and the Bride say come.*" This is the last mention of the Spirit in the Bible, and it is full of significance. "If we would," says F. D. Maurice in his work on the Apocalypse (p. 442), "in any little measure believe these words—if we did, indeed, own that the

Spirit of the Eternal God was Himself speaking them to the thirsty and broken spirits of men in all regions of the earth—if we did hear them echoed by the Church of all ages, we might be permitted, each in his own little sphere, each by the strength and encouragement which he is able to give his brothers in their spheres, to bear a part in the work of breaking the chains that bind our race. And we shall be taught, brethren, in wonderful ways that this power is bestowed on the weakest, if they will but ascribe it to the Spirit and the Bride, and not to their own might and wisdom. Very feeble words will enter into the hearts of human beings, and will seem to die, and when they have died will bear fruit. For the words are not ours, but His in whom is Life, and whose life is the light of men.”

The Spirit and the Bride testify mutually to one another. The progressive advancement of the Church of Christ in knowledge, and in holiness, and in power is the work of the Spirit of God. The testimony which is given to Christ age after age, a testimony which is seen not only in the individual characters and lives of Christians, but in the growing glory of the Saviour’s Kingdom as it subdues all things unto itself, is a testimony to the fulfilment of the ancient promise that God would “*pour out His Spirit on all flesh.*” The one great want of the Church in the present time is to take to heart this union of the Bride of Christ with His Spirit. Our voices must be as that one from Heaven, or they will accomplish nothing. There must be unison between the Voice of the Spirit and the Voice of the Church. Is it possible



to deny that, as the Church of Christ manifests itself to the world at the present time, there is not this unison? Spiritual power seems to be lacking. Victory over the world seems to be delayed. Doubt itself sits often upon our very banners. We are divided, and there is little courage, little heroism, little dash of victory in our assault upon the world and sin. May not one reason of this decline of spiritual energy in the Church be the faulty and inadequate understanding of the doctrine of the Spirit? There are theories of the Atonement which limit the work of Redemption; so there are theories of the Spirit which limit the work of the Spirit. The "*Bride*" is disrobed of the pure garments of Faith and Hope and Love; she is arrayed in the gaudy garniture of ecclesiastical pretension. The idea of a fixed and stately organisation of the body, not the soul, of Christianity, has been wrought out into a theory of gifts and grace, handed down from one to another in a line of succession, as though there were a *παράδοσις*, a tradition, of the Spirit, as there is a tradition of belief and external observance. The result has been a restraint upon the freedom of the Church; and a loss of blessing to the world. There is nothing throughout the teaching of the Scriptures, as this review has shown, which supports any such limitation of spiritual gifts. While apostles certainly conferred such gifts as were sent to the early Church through their prayers and the laying on of their hands, we cannot find any evidence that they were absolutely alone in such a power; they exercised it only as the leaders and representatives of the whole Church. The

faith and prayer of any two or three of the sincere followers of Christ would be equally efficacious in obtaining the outpouring of the heavenly gifts. It is perfectly true that there were degrees of inspiration, and that some might be said to be "*full of the Holy Ghost*," while others might need to be warned that they were grieving Him, or to be roused to stir up the gifts which were only potentially, not actually, in them. But the Church of Christ, in all its variety of individual character and attainment, is the Bride of Christ. With that Bride the Spirit is united. The offices which exist in the Church are not depositaries of spiritual endowment. It is a false view of office. Who are we, asks the Apostle, but ministers, servants, through whose instrumentality ye believed? "*Stewards*," indeed, of the treasure of knowledge laid up with us for distribution in the world; but only stewards in the sense of distributors. Nothing has hindered the work of the Gospel more than a false ecclesiasticism. Nothing will cast out the evil, and bring the people of God together into a unity of the Spirit, which shall render them invincible and victorious over the world, but the same doctrine firmly believed and practically manifested which the apostles put in the forefront of their teaching, and which was exemplified in all the life and work of the early Church.

But while the consistent teaching of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, as we have seen, enables us to put aside the false pretensions of ecclesiastical systems and whatever would restrain the freedom of the Spirit, these last words of the Apostle John remind us

that if the Bride of Christ would realise all the fulness of her glory as His Messenger of Peace and Salvation to all mankind, then the doctrine of the Spirit must be a living doctrine in the Church. "The world contains the elements of which the Church is composed. In the Church, these elements are penetrated by a uniting, reconciling power. The Church is, therefore, human society in its normal state; the world, that same society irregular and abnormal. The world is the Church without God; the Church is the world restored to its relation with God, taken back by Him into the state for which He created it. Deprive the Church of its centre, and you make it into a world. If you give it a false centre, as the Romanists have done, still preserving the sacraments, forms, creeds, which speak of the true centre, there necessarily comes out that grotesque hybrid which we witness, a world assuming all the dignity and authority of a Church—a Church practising all the worst fictions of a world; the world assuming to be heavenly—a Church confessing itself to be of the earth earthy." While we abhor and reject all such false forms of the spiritual, let us yet rejoice that the promise is given us that the Spirit and the Bride shall be one. All the plenitude of the Spirit shall be in the Church; all the life and possibilities of the Church shall be developed. "We may be sure that the Spirit will work as He has always worked; that He will change nothing, and yet will make all things new. That mighty wonder which we behold every year when the self-same roots and stems, which were the symbols of all that is hard, and dry, and

separate, become clothed with verdure, full of life, and joy, and music, will be exhibited in the moral world. No form will be cast away, no ordinance will be treated as worthless; nothing which has expressed the thought or belief of any man will be found unnecessary, because the Spirit of the living God will call forth every sleeping and latent power into activity, everything that has been dead into life, all that has been divided into harmony. Only the miserable counterfeits will pass away. Whatever has been true, if it has been ever so weak and broken, will find its place in that creation which God has declared to be very good" (F. D. Maurice, "Theol. Essays," pp. 400, 401).

The Bride is the Lamb's wife. The Spirit which shall fill the Church is the Spirit of Christ. Surely if that plenitude of spiritual power which all Christians desire shall ever be manifested, it is by the Bride becoming more and more ready for the Bridegroom. When He the Spirit of Truth shall come, His work shall be to take the things of Jesus and show them to His people. Those things of Christ are the things of His threefold office, for He is *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*.

The manifestation of the Spirit's presence and power will certainly follow the lines of these three perfections of the Saviour. He is the *Prophet of prophets*, and the Spirit of God will adorn the Bride with His Truth. There can be no true revival of religion apart from a quickening of faith. The "*truth as it is in Jesus*" has been obscured by much in the Church which is false, and by many influences coming from the world, by which the

minds of God's own people have been led astray. A true doctrine is the work of the Holy Ghost. The doubts and errors of this time of transition must be purged away by a fresh baptism of the Spirit, who can give us not only the Word written, but His own witness within. He is the Light of Life, and His light it is in which we shall see the light.

The Spirit of God will also make the Church of Christ a true temple, in which spiritual sacrifices are continually offered, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Jesus is still the High Priest. Religion can never dispense with worship. It must always be the approach of the creature to the Creator. The Reconciler has broken down every wall of separation. The whole world, with all its infinite variety of form and sentiment, can yet be one in the Spirit. The "things of Christ" are the only things that will ever unite mankind in religion. The essence of His Priesthood is His own Divine worship. The substance of His reconciliation between God and man is Love. "*God so loved the world.*" Such a truth can be put into all human hearts by nothing but by God's own Spirit. Mere ritual will never do it. Systems and organisations will utterly fail. Words of creeds will die into empty air. "The Spirit and the Bride say come."

And the Saviour is the King of kings. His Kingdom is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. We are tempted continually to unite with the powers of this world, political, social, economical, philosophical—powers which spring from earthly sources and return

to the dust from whence they were taken ; but all such alliances of the truly spiritual with the kingdom of this world will prove utter weakness. It may be necessary that human society should pass through many changes before the true "Kingdom which cannot be moved" shall be established ; but the Bride of Christ should never forget that she is espoused to a Royal Bridegroom. Are the poor, vain efforts of men to be lauded and honoured by us as the loyal subjects of Jesus as though they were His commandments ? No ; rather let us wait for His return, diligently trading with the few talents committed unto us, as ever "under our great Taskmaster's eye," that, being faithful over a few things, He may reveal to us at last the full glory of His Eternal Kingdom, and make us "rulers over many things," entering into the joy of our Lord. Our life and our prayers will be as one voice, uniting with the voice of His Spirit. "*The Spirit and the Bride say come.*"

THE END.



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